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ABSTRACT

A special assessment of writing skills was conducted during the 1979-80 school year for the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) by the Education Commission of the States. The purposes of the study were to examine the writing abilities of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds enrolled in the DoDDS System, and to compare their writing abilities with students enrolled in U.S. schools, as reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The assessment focused on the students' ability to write for a specific purpose. Items presented to students during the assessment are appended. Essays were scored by the primary trait system. In order to ensure comparability of DoDDS results, National Assessment procedures were closely replicated. The report is organized by age group. Within each chapter, results on items administered to that age group are presented as is a discussion of the relationships among performance on various tasks. The comparison between DoDDS and their counterparts as measured by the National Assessment is included at the end of each chapter. (Author/GK)

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STUDENT WRITING, 1980

A Description of the Writing Abilities of 9-, 13-, and 17-Year-Olds Enrolled in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

Overview of the Writing Assessment 2

Scoring of the Writing Assessment. 3

Administration of the DoDDS Assessment 4

Analysis of the Data 7

CHAPTER 2: RESULTS FOR 9-YEAR-OLDS. 9

Performance of 9-Year-Old DoDDS Students 10

Comparison of Results for DoDDS 9-Year-Olds and the Nation . . 19

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS FOR 13-YEAR-OLDS 22

Performance of 13-Year-Old DoDDS Students. 23

Comparison of Results for DoDDS 13-Year-Olds and the Nation. . 37

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS FOR 17-YEAR-OLDS 42

Performance of 17-Year-Old DoDDS Students. 43

Comparison of Results for DoDDS 17-Year-Olds and the Nation. . 54

APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT BOOKLETS

APPENDIX B: SCORING GUIDES

APPENDIX C: BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Percentages of 9-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Fireflies" Exercise 11

Table 2. Percentages of 9-year-olds at Each Cohesion Score Level, "Fireflies" Exercise 12

Table 3. Results for Male and Female 9-year-old Students, "Fireflies" Exercise 14

Table 4. Differences in Primary Trait and Cohesion Results for 9-year-olds Attending DoDDS Schools for Different Lengths of Time, "Fireflies" Exercise 15

Table 5. Percentages of 9-year-olds Responding Correctly to Sentence Combining Items. 17

Table 6. Percentages of 9-year-olds Making Various Errors on Sentence Combining Items. 17

Table 7. Comparison of 9-year-olds Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores with Sentence Combining Performance. 18

Table 8. Comparison of Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores for 9-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Fireflies" Exercise. 19

Table 9. Comparison of 9-year-old DoDDS Students' Performance and the Nation, Sentence Combining Items 20

Table 10. Percentages of 13-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Rainy Day" Exercise 24

Table 11. Percentages of 13-year-olds at Each Cohesion Score Level, "Rainy Day" Exercise 25

Table 12. Comparison of 13-year-olds' Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores, "Rainy Day" Exercise 26

Table 13. Results for Male and Female 13-year-olds, Primary Trait and Cohesion Scales, "Rainy Day" Exercise. 27

Table 14. Percentages of 13-year-olds Responding Correctly to Sentence Combining Items. 30

Table 15. Percentages of 13-year-olds Making Various Errors on Sentence Combining Items. 30

Table 16. Results for Male and Female 13-year-olds, Sentence Combining Items. 31

LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

Table 17. Differences in Percentages Among 13-year-olds Attending DoDDS Schools for Different Lengths of Time, Sentence Combining Items. 32

Table 18. Comparison of 13-year-olds' Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores with Sentence Combining Performance. 33

Table 19. Responses to Questions about Writing Instruction, Age 13 35

Table 20. Comparison of Primary Trait and Cohesion Score for 13-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Rainy Day" Exercise. 37

Table 21. Comparison of 13-year-old DoDDS Students' Performance and the Nation, Sentence Combining Items 38

Table 22. Comparison of Writing Instructional Experiences of 13-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation. 40

Table 23. Comparison of 13-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation Engaging in Various Numbers of Writing Instructional Activities. 41

Table 24. Percentages of 17-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Stork" Exercise 45

Table 25. Percentages of 17-year-olds at Each Cohesion Score Level, "Stork" Exercise 45

Table 26. Comparison of 17-year-olds' Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores, "Stork" Exercise 46

Table 27. Results for Male and Female 17-year-olds, Primary Trait and Cohesion Scales, "Stork" Exercise. 46

Table 28. Percentages of 17-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Rec Center" Exercise. 49

Table 29. Comparison of 17-year-olds' Primary Trait Scores on "Stork" and "Rec Center" Exercises 50

Table 30. Responses to Questions about Writing Instruction, Age 17 52

Table 31. Comparison of Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores for 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Stork" Exercise. 55

Table 32. Comparison of Primary Trait Scores for 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Rec Center" Exercise 56

Table 33. Comparison of Writing Instructional Experiences of 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation. 57

Table 34. Comparison of 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation Engaging in Various Numbers of Writing Instructional Activities 60

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Writing Assessment

This report presents results of the special assessment of writing skills conducted during the 1979-80 school year for the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). The purposes of the study were 1) to examine the writing abilities of 9-, 13- and 17-year-olds enrolled in the DoDDS system and 2) to compare their writing abilities to those students enrolled in schools within the continental United States, as reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

The quality of a piece of writing depends upon many elements: content, style, organization and mechanical features, such as sentence structure, punctuation, grammar and spelling. For students, busy trying to learn the conventions of writing, emphasis is often placed upon mechanics, sentence structure and paragraph construction. However, exclusive focus on these elements can result in writing that, although technically correct, may not accomplish its intended purpose.

The 1978-79 DoDDS assessment of writing, also conducted by ECS, was scored primarily for mechanics. Counts of types of sentences used, errors in sentence construction and errors in punctuation, grammar, word choice and spelling were provided, as well as a measure of extent of paragraph development. These data described the way the essays were constructed but did not provide information on content of the writing or its appropriateness for the task at hand.

To gain a more complete picture of the writing abilities of DoDDS students, the 1979-80 assessment of writing focused on the ability of students to write for a specific purpose. Nine- and 13-year-olds responded to an expressive writing task; 17-year-olds were asked to write one expressive and one persuasive essay. The two

younger ages also responded to several items that required them to combine simple sentences. These items were designed to determine whether students could use various embedding techniques when specifically asked to do so.

In addition, 13- and 17-year-olds answered questions about their instructional experiences with writing. Questions involved frequency of writing done in school, use of prewriting and rewriting techniques, extent of teacher feedback and enjoyment of writing.

The items as presented to DoDDS students during the assessment appear in Appendix A. It should be noted that all of these items were included in National Assessment's third survey of writing which was conducted during the 1978-79 school year within the continental United States.

Scoring of the Writing Assessment

The essays written by DoDDS students were scored by the primary trait system (PTS), a method developed by National Assessment to evaluate whether a piece of writing achieves its purpose. In this system, essay tasks are designed so that respondents have a specific purpose for writing and a particular audience in mind. Essays are rated on a four-point scale for achievement of the primary trait -- whether it be expressive, explanatory or persuasive.

Each essay task has a scoring guide specifically tailored to the primary trait being measured which unambiguously defines four levels of proficiency in the skill being assessed. Generally, level 1 indicates no evidence of the skill, level 2 marginal evidence, level 3 solid performance and level 4 very good performance. Each paper is scored in terms of the scoring criteria rather than in terms of the entire pool of papers. While this approach does not rank order papers, it does

provide a description of student writing abilities for the primary skill or trait being measured.

The expressive writing task administered at each age to the DoDDS students was also scored for cohesion. Cohesion refers to the many ways words and ideas are linked together in writing to create a sense of wholeness and coherence. For cohesion scoring, trained readers rated essays in terms of a four-point scale representing different degrees of cohesiveness. Level 1 papers display no or few connections between sentences and are loosely structured; level 2 papers display attempts to tie ideas together but do not show any unifying structure. Cohesive papers (level 3) display gathering and ordering of details and ideas, and fully coherent papers (level 4) display a number of strategies and services that bind the narrative into a unified whole.

The sentence combining tasks administered to 9- and 13-year-olds were also scored by trained readers. Generally, the items were scored in terms of whether a student had successfully combined the sentences into a single sentence while preserving the lexical and syntatic relationships present in the original sentences.

Complete scoring guides for all of these items are presented in Appendix B.

Administration of the DoDDS Assessment

National Assessment procedures were replicated as closely as possible to insure comparability of DoDDS results. A representative sample of between 850 and 950 students at each of the three ages was initially selected from student listings provided by the DoDDS schools. Although the goal was a sample of 750 students at each age, oversampling techniques were used to reach the desired sample size. This was done to allow for assessment materials being lost in the mails, the

accidental inclusion of students who were not age-eligible, student absences and/or moves from the school, and the potential exclusion of students who participated in administrations in which the usual administration procedures could not be followed.

After the sample for an age was selected, materials were mailed to each school having students selected to participate in the assessment. These materials included: a listing of students selected, an instruction manual to be used by the DoDDS personnel responsible for administering the assessment, the assessment booklets (one for each student) and a paced audio tape that read instructions and assessment items to students. Thirteen-year-olds were assessed during January; 9-year-olds were assessed during February and 17-year-olds were assessed in March.

Data collection procedures for DoDDS differed slightly from procedures used by NAEP. First, school personnel were used to administer the assessment. National Assessment hires and trains a special administration staff, which travels to schools to administer assessment materials. However, such an approach did not seem efficient or cost-effective given the location of DoDDS students throughout the world. Second, although NAEP assesses its 13-year-olds between October and December, DoDDS 13-year-olds were assessed in January because it was not possible to work out the logistics of assessing DoDDS students prior to that time. It was decided that if 13-year-old DoDDS students showed a radical difference from their stateside counterparts, a difference that did not show up at the other two age levels, the difference in administration time would have to be considered as a factory. However, the data do not reflect any sizeable effect that might be attributable to time of assessment.

After the assessment for an age group in a particular school was completed, materials were sent to the regional evaluation coordinators who in turn sent all

assessment materials for an age group to Westinghouse DataScore Systems (WDSS), Iowa City, Iowa, the scoring subcontractor. WDSS is also the scoring subcontractor for National Assessment. On arrival, materials underwent receipt control procedures like those used by National Assessment to insure that all materials were accounted for, to remove essays written by students who were non-age-eligible and to determine how to treat essays where there had been problems with the administration of the assessment. As a result of these procedures, the final sample of DoDDS students was less than the goal of 750 at two of the ages. At age 9, the sample size was 710; at age 13, 780; and at age 17, 709. It should be noted that the sample of DoDDS students at age 17 does not include any students from the Panamanian region.

Readers were trained using a sample of NAEP and DoDDS papers. Once the readers were thoroughly versed in scoring procedures, they began to score the essays received from DoDDS schools.

Essays were read by two readers for primary traits. If the score given by these readers did not agree, a third reader resolved differences. Essays were read, in another session, by two readers for cohesion. Again, if scores did not agree, a third reader was used. Sentence combining tasks also were scored by trained readers; only one reader was used for each of these items.

Since the DoDDS assessment was conducted in 1979-80 and the last NAEP writing assessment in 1978-79, papers were not scored together. Reliability studies were conducted to insure that papers from the two different years were scored using the same criteria applied in the same way so that DoDDS and NAEP results were comparable. A ten percent sample (250) of the National Assessment responses was rescored with the DoDDS responses, and their rescores were compared to their

original scores. For the primary trait tasks, the percent of agreement between the two scores was 91% for the persuasive essay administered to 17-year-olds, 96% for the expressive tasks administered to 13- and 17-year-olds and 95% for 9-year-olds' expressive task. For the sentence-combining items, the percent of agreement was never below 98%. In each instance, discrepancies between the original score and the rescore were examined to determine if readers were making a systematic error in one direction or another. No systematic shifts in scoring were found. Thus, it appears that the same criteria was applied in the way way for the scoring of both the National Assessment and DoDDS papers.

Analysis of the Data

Each of the items included in the writing assessment was analyzed to produce data for all DoDDS students, males and females. In addition, results were analyzed by length of time in the DoDDS system (less than a year, 1 to 2 years, 3 or more years) and language spoken in the home prior to starting school (English only, a language other than English, English and some other language). It should be noted that these two reporting categories were based on student self-reports to questions on the back of assessment booklets (found in Appendix A). Percentages of students in each of the subcategories are presented in Appendix C along with percentages in the subcategories for the other questions included on the background questionnaire.

Since different people have different standards for "acceptable" levels of writing ability, percentages of responses falling in each score point for both primary trait and cohesion scoring are reported. Also, responses in categories 3 and 4 have been totaled for both types of scoring, and categories 2, 3 and 4 have been totaled for primary trait scoring only.

The relationships between students' responses to different items and different scoring systems were also analyzed and are presented in the report. Primary trait and cohesion ratings are compared to determine whether those who do well on one scale do as well on the other or whether the reverse is true. For 9- and 13-year-olds, performance on essay tasks is compared with achievement on sentence combining items. Finally, comparisons between the National Assessment and DoDDS results are made when comparable data are available.

Differences in achievement between groups that are statistically significant at the .05 level are asterisked in the tables in this report. From a statistical viewpoint, this means that one can be 95% confident that the difference is real and not a chance artifact of the study design or the sample. However, many results may be important even though they are not statistically significant; conversely, statistical significance does not automatically mean that a result has importance from an educational point of view. Readers are urged to make their own judgments as to the educational importance of various results while reading the report.

The report has been organized by age group. Within each chapter, performance on the items administered to that age group are presented, followed by a discussion of the relationships among performance on the various tasks. The comparison between DoDDS students and their stateside counterparts, as measured by National Assessment, is included at the end of each chapter.

CHAPTER 2

RESULTS FOR 9-YEAR-OLDS

Performance of 9-year-old DoDDS Students

Items for 9-year-olds investigated writing skills through an open-ended essay task and subordination skills through a series of items asking students to combine several given sentences into one sentence.

The essay task was designed to elicit expressive writing, that is, writing to reveal feelings or ideas. Expressive writing is useful as a method of initiating writing instruction, particularly at the younger ages, because it generally involves topics and techniques with which young students are familiar. Expressive writing provides students with opportunities to make their writing precise and concrete and to elaborate details--skills that are needed in other modes of discourse as well.

Storytelling is a form of expression with which most young students are familiar and is easily translated to writing instruction by having students write their stories rather than tell them. The writing task given to 9-year-olds examined skill in written storytelling, asking them to write a story about a picture of a girl collecting fireflies. The actual instructions were:

> Here is a picture of a girl who is having fun in the summer. Look at the picture for a while. What do you think she is doing? What do you think she might do next?
>
> Write a story that tells what the picture is about.

The item as it appeared to students and the picture are found in the 9-year-olds' item booklet in Appendix A. Nine-year-olds were given approximately 15 minutes to complete their essay. Since the specific task was to "write a story that tells what the picture is about", students were expected to write some sort of story or narrative, not merely to describe the picture.

Responses to this task were first judged for rhetorical effectiveness--how well they achieved the purpose (or primary trait) of the task, which was to tell a story. The primary trait rating criteria, established prior to seeing the

responses, specified four levels of quality from inadequate to excellent. The lowest rated responses (level 1) tended to provide some minimal information or explanation about the picture by simply and briefly answering the questions. The next (level 2) level of papers provided moderate to ample explanation, but not in a story framework. Competent responses (level 3) explained what was happening in a narrative framework, and superior (level 4) papers provided fully controlled and detailed stories. The complete scoring guide appears in Appendix B.

Table 1 shows percentages of DoDDS 9-year-olds in each score category as well as percentages for categories 2, 3 and 4 combined (marginal or better papers) and 3 and 4 combined (competent or better papers). The nonrateable category, 0, includes students who did not respond, wrote on a different topic or wrote so illegibly that their papers could not be scored.

Table 1. Percentages of 9-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Fireflies" Exercise.

Nonrateable	Some Explanation, No Story	Ample Explanation, Little/No Story	Adequate Story	Developed Story	Marginal or Better	Competent or Better
0	1	2	3	4	2,3 & 4	3 & 4
2.8%	12.1%	58.9%	23.1%	3.1%	85.1%	26.2%+

+Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

About one-quarter of the 9-year-olds wrote competent or better stories; an additional three-fifths were able to describe or explain the picture. Thus, about eighty-five percent were able to perform this task at at least a marginal level.

In addition to a score for overall rhetorical effectiveness, papers were rated for cohesion. Cohesive ties are the devices writers use to link ideas and give their narratives coherence. There are many kinds of cohesive ties and strategies. Some primary kinds--lexical cohesion, conjunction, reference, substitution and ellipsis--are illustrated in the cohesion scoring guide for this exercise found in Appendix B. A writer can also achieve coherence by using rhythm, repetition, story frames, introspective summing up and other such strategies to bind parts of the narrative and guide the readers.

Scorers were trained to recognize all these approaches and then categorized the "Fireflies" papers using a four-point scoring guide. Papers in the lowest group (level 1) display no or few connections between sentences and are loosely structured. Papers in the next group (level 2) display attempts to tie ideas together here or there but do not show any unifying structure. Very little would be lost if details were rearranged. Cohesive papers (level 3) display gathering and ordering of details and ideas, and fully coherent papers (level 4) display a number of strategies and devices that bind the narrative into a unified whole. A more complete description of the four score points appears in Appendix B.

Table 2 shows the percentages of DoDDS 9-year-olds whose papers were rated in each of the four cohesion score points and percentages in score points 3 and 4 combined. Results for levels 2, 3 and 4 combined are not presented because level 2 papers are not really cohesive.

Table 2. Percentages of 9-year-olds at Each Cohesion Score Level, "Fireflies" Exercise.

Non-rateable	Inadequate	Attempts at Cohesion	Cohesion	Cohesion and Coherence	Cohesion or Better
0	1	2	3	4	3 & 4
2.8%	13.1%	41.0%	38.3%	4.8%	43.1%+

+Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

More 9-year-olds had scores of 3 or better on cohesiveness than did on the primary trait of this essay--the ability to tell a story. Slightly over 40% wrote cohesive essays, while only 26% were competent or better at telling a story.

In studying the relationship of primary trait and cohesion scores, it was found that scores on the two scales tended to be similar. Sixty percent of the 9-year-olds had the same score on both scales--6% received a rating of 1 on both, 32% scored a 2 on both, 18% scored 3 on both and 3% scored 4 on both. For the other papers, scores were usually not more than one score point apart. When there was a difference, students tended to do better on the cohesion scale. For example, 20% of the 9-year-olds received a primary trait rating of 2 and a cohesion rating of 3, indicating that many of the papers that described the picture instead of telling a story were still cohesive.

Nine-year-old girls appear to be better storytellers than boys at that age, or perhaps they are simply more willing to engage in the task of telling a story. Although males and females did not differ significantly from the overall DoDDS percentage in writing cohesive essays (levels 3 & 4) females showed a tendency to do better than males, and females were more likely than males to achieve the 4 level in essay cohesiveness, with 7% of them writing fully cohesive essays compared with 3% of the males. Table 3 summarizes the differences in primary trait and cohesion performance on this exercise for males and females. Differences from the overall percentage are shown in parentheses beneath the percentage for each sex. A positive difference indicates performance above the overall percentage; a negative difference indicates a performance below the overall level.

Table 3. Results for Male and Female 9-year-old Students, "Fireflies" Exercise.

	All DoDDS 9-year-olds	Males	Females
Primary trait score			
3 & 4 combined	26.2%	20.4% (-5.8*)	32.5% (6.3*)
2, 3 & 4 combined	85.1	82.1 (-3.0*)	88.3 (3.2*)
Cohesion score			
3 & 4 combined	43.1%	39.7% (-3.4)	46.8% (3.7)

*Indicates difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Students were asked what language was spoken most often in the home before they entered school: English, some other language or both English and another language. Results for this item did not differ significantly by language spoken in the home. Any differences that did appear were generally small and not consistent.

Students were also grouped as to whether they and spent less than one year, one to two years or three or more years in the DoDDS system. As Table 4 shows, patterns of performance did not show many differences for the number of years attending DoDDS schools, although there was a tendency for those who had been in the DoDDS system for three or more years to be less likely to appear in the lowest (level 1) primary trait and cohesion categories. Table 4 shows only differences from the overall DoDDS percentage; again, positive differences indicate a performance above the overall percentage, while negative differences describe a performance below the overall percentage.

Table 4. Differences in Primary Trait and Cohesion Results for 9-year-olds Attending DoDDS Schools for Different Lengths of Time, "Fireflies" Exercise.

		Overall Percentage	Less Than 1 yr.	1-2 yrs.	3 or more yrs.
Primary Trait	1	12.1%	2.6%	2.2%	-4.2%*
	2	58.9	-7.1	-1.3	5.0*
	3	23.1	4.2	0.6	-0.4
	4	3.1	1.1	0.2	-0.2
Cohesion	1	13.1%	0.2%	1.6%	-3.4%*
	2	41.0	1.7	-4.3	3.1
	3	38.3	-3.3	4.6	1.0
	4	4.8	2.2	-0.3	-0.5

*Indicates difference is significant at the .05 level.

Nine-year-olds also responded to three sentence combining tasks in which they were given three simple sentences and asked to combine them into a longer sentence that meant the same thing. These items were developed to determine whether students demonstrate subordination skills when specifically asked to do so. These skills--processes by which writers embed information in their sentences--enable good writers to convey information more efficiently. Respondents were asked to combine the following three sets of sentences. The complete items and instructions to respondents are found in Appendix A.

Part A. Bill's coat was in the closet.
The coat was new.
It was leather.

Part B. A rope was the clue to the mystery.
The rope was twisted.
The rope was hanging from a tree branch.

Part C. John knows a magician.
The magician is clever.
The magician can make an elephant disappear.

Three criteria were used for scoring responses. First, responses were scored for the number of T-units used. (A T-unit is a main clause with all its attendent modifying words, phrases and dependent clauses.) A correct response could contain only one T-unit. This approach describes subordination and coordination of words, phrases and subordinate clauses, but does not provide information about whether students tended to string independent clauses together into compound sentences or run-ons rather than embed information. Second, responses were scored for lexical content--whether additions to or omissions of the given content had occurred. Third, responses were scored for syntax--whether the combined sentence had a meaning that was the same as, or at least not prohibited by, the meaning of the original sentences without becoming awkward or stylistically inept. To be considered correct, students had to use only one T-unit, preserve the given content without adding to it and retain the meaning of the original sentences. The complete scoring guides for these items are presented in Appendix B.

Part A, "Bill's coat," measured single-word modification skills and could be answered by simply using adjectives to modify the word "coat." The second two tasks were more difficult. Each required the use of an adjective, but Part B also required a modifying phrase and Part C a relative clause. As seen in Table 5, 9-year-olds did not prove to be highly proficient on these items. Approximately 41% of the 9-year-olds combined the sentences in part A correctly; fewer students--21% and 20%--answered parts B and C, respectively, correctly. Only 10% of the 9-year-olds responded to all three items correctly. Forty-seven percent answered at least one correctly, and 26% answered two or more correctly.

Table 5. Percentages of 9-year-olds Responding Correctly to Sentence Combining Items.

	Percentage of 9-year-olds Responding Correctly
Part A	41.4%
Part B	20.9
Part C	20.4
At least one correct	47.2
At least two correct	25.6
All three correct	9.9

Some 9-year-olds followed instructions and generated only one T-unit but made errors in other aspects of sentence combining; others used more than one T-unit. Percentages making several different types of errors are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Percentages of 9-year-olds Making Various Errors on Sentence Combining Items.

	Percent of 9-year-olds		
	Part A	Part B	Part C
Used one T-unit and correct syntax, made lexical errors	10.0%	10.3%	5.5%
Used one T-unit and correct lexicon, made syntax errors	3.4	5.2	9.0
Used one T-unit, made both lexical and syntax errors	2.8	6.8	6.3
Used more than one T-unit	23.8	31.0	33.4

On sentence combining items, the difference between males' and females' performance generally was not significant. Differences in the language spoken in the home also did not appear to have any appreciable relationship to performance.

Those who did well on primary trait and cohesion scales were more likely to do well on sentence combining items than those who scored lower on the two essay scales.

Approximately 10% of the total sample of DoDDS 9-year-olds got all three sentences right. Nearly everyone who got all three sentences right scored 2 or better on both the primary trait and cohesion scales--9.3% got all three sentences right and scored 2 or better on the primary trait scale while 9.6% did so on the cohesion scale.

Table 7 shows a comparison of primary trait and cohesion scores with sentence combining performance. For both scales, the first column shows the total percentage in a score point and the other columns show the percent of the total sample getting 0, 1, 2 or 3 of the sentence combining tasks right. In addition, the percentages in parentheses show the percentage of those <u>in that score point</u> getting various numbers of sentences correct. To obtain these percentages, each score point is separately considered as 100%.

Table 7. Comparison of 9-year-olds Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores with Sentence Combining Performance.

Primary Trait Scale[1]

	Total Percent In Score Point	Got 0 Sentence Combining items right	(% of Score Point)	Got 1 Sentence Combining item right	(% of Score Point)	Got 2 Sentence Combining items right	(% of Score Point)	Got 3 Sentence Combining items right	(% of Score Point)
1	12.1 (100%)[2]	9.2%	(76%)	1.3%	(11%)	1.1%	(9%)	0.6%	(5%)
2	58.9 (100%)	33.0	(56%)	13.4	(23%)	8.5	(14%)	4.1	(7%)
3	23.1 (100%)	7.6	(33%)	6.3	(27%)	4.9	(21%)	4.2	(18%)
4	3.1 (100%)	0.4	(13%)	0.6	(19%)	1.1	(35%)	1.0	(32%)

Cohesion Scale[1]

1	13.1 (100%)[2]	9.6%	(73%)	2.4%	(18%)	0.8%	(6%)	0.3%	(2%)
2	41.0 (100%)	26.1	(64%)	7.6	(19%)	4.9	(12%)	2.4	(6%)
3	38.3 (100%)	13.9	(36%)	10.4	(27%)	8.2	(21%)	5.8	(15%)
4	4.8 (100%)	0.6	(13%)	1.1	(23%)	1.7	(35%)	1.4	(29%)

[1]The total percentage of DoDDS students does not total 100% because some essays were nonrateable.

[2]Percentages of score points may not total 100% due to rounding error.

As seen in Table 7, considerably higher percentages of those in the lower score points did not answer any sentence combining items correctly, while the majority of those in score point 4 on either scale combined either two or three sets of sentences correctly. Approximately one-third of those at level 3 on both the primary trait and cohesion scales failed to answer any of the sentence combining items correctly.

Comparison of Results for DoDDS 9-year-olds and the Nation

In writing a story about the girl catching fireflies, DoDDS 9-year-olds did considerably better than their stateside counterparts, as measured by NAEP, on both the primary trait and cohesion scales. Table 8 presents percentages of DoDDS students and the nation in various score points and the differences in these percentages. Positive differences mean that the DoDDS percentage was higher than the national percentage; negative differences indicate that more students in the nation that DoDDS students were found in a score category.

Table 8. Comparison of Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores for 9-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Fireflies" Exercise.

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference
Primary Trait Score			
1	29.3%	12.1%	-17.2*
2	57.3	58.9	1.6*
3	9.4	23.1	13.7*
4	0.6	3.1	2.5*
3 & 4 combined	10.0	26.2	16.2*
2, 3 & 4 combined	67.3	85.1	17.8*
Cohesion Score Level			
1	28.8%	13.1%	-15.7*
2	46.0	41.0	- 5.0*
3	20.9	38.3	17.4*
4	1.0	4.8	3.8*
3 & 4 combined	21.9	43.1	21.2*

*Indicates difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

About two and one-half times as many DoDDS students as the nation scored 3 or better on the primary trait scale, while twice as many scored 3 or better on the cohesion scale. A far higher percentage of the nation was found in level 1. on both scales than DoDDS students, although percentages in level 2 were more similar.

Differences were also evident on the sentence combining items (Table 9). Although differences were not significant on the easiest set of sentences, DoDDS students outperformed the nation by about five percentage points on the other two. Percentages of those who used one T-unit but made lexical or syntactic errors or both and percentages who used two or more T-units were similar for the nation and DoDDS students.

Table 9. Comparison of 9-year-old DoDDS Students' Performance and the Nation, Sentence Combining Items.

		Nation	DoDDS	Difference
Part A	Bill's coat	38.1%	41.4%	3.3
B	Rope	15.8	20.9	5.1*
C	Magician	15.6	20.4	4.8*
One or more correct		41.5	47.2	5.7*
Two or more correct		20.4	25.6	5.2*
All three correct		7.5	9.9	2.4

Differences between DoDDS and NAEP males and females did not always parallel the differences seen for overall performance. For primary trait scores on the "Fireflies" exercise, more DoDDS males than males in the nation were found at score level 2 and fewer DoDDS females than females in the nation appeared there. At score level 4, no significant differences occurred between the two groups of males, but more DoDDS females than females in the nation scored there. Differences in performance by sex were the same as overall differences between DoDDS students and the nation on the cohesion scale.

On the sentence combining items, no differences between DoDDS and the nation were seen either in overall performance or in performance of males and females on part A. For parts B and C, on which DoDDS students were above the national performance level, performance of males in DoDDS and in the nation did not differ significantly while more DoDDS females than females in the nation answered correctly. Performance of DoDDS males did tend to be above that of males in the nation but the differences were not statistically significant.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS FOR 13-YEAR-OLDS

Performance of 13-year-old DoDDS Students

Thirteen-year-olds also responded to one essay item and three sentence combining tasks. In addition, 13-year-olds answered a series of questions about their instructional experiences with writing.

Like the 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds were asked to perform an expressive writing task. Expressive writing is writing done primarily for fun and self-expression, rather than for some other purpose, such as explanation or persuasion. This by no means diminishes its importance, for the skills involved in expressive discourse are central to all kinds of communication. Accordingly, many teachers develop student writing skills and capitalize on student enthusiasm at the same time by providing frequent expressive opportunities.

Following is the expressive assignment given to 13-year-olds:

> Pretend that when you got up this morning, you looked out the window and saw that it was raining. How did you feel?
>
> Think for a while about the feelings you have on a rainy morning. Then write a composition telling how a rainy <u>school</u> morning makes you feel.

The item as it appeared to students is found in Appendix A.

Although this appears to be a simple enough task, it is not. Many people have difficulty writing about feelings. Their first drafts serve to get the feelings named, but they usually need another draft in which to shape and harmonize the feelings, especially if they are contradictory or complex. In the assessment, students only had one chance to do the assignment, of course, so the results should be considered with this in mind.

The primary trait scoring guide for this item was designed to evaluate success in expressing feelings through systematic elaboration of details that create a mood. The feelings may be either simple or complex, but they should not be abstract and undetailed.

The complete primary trait scoring guide for this item is found in Appendix B.

Briefly, the four levels of competency involved the following criteria. Category 1 responses show little or no expression of feelings; category 2 responses evidence a minimal expression of feelings by naming or implying a feeling and naming some features of the situation that account for the feeling. Responses in category 3 establish and elaborate a feeling but do not show simultaneous control of structure and detail. Category 4 responses precisely define a feeling and substantiate it through a variety of details systematically arranged in a structure.

Table 10 presents levels of skill in accomplishing the primary trait of this task. The majority of the students made category 2 responses.

Table 10. Percentages of 13-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Rainy Day" Exercise.

Non-rateable	Little or no Feelings Expressed	Minimal Feelings Expressed	Expressed Feelings	Elaborated Feelings	Marginal or Better	Competent or Better
0	1	2	3	4	2,3 & 4	3 & 4
0.6%	27.4%	56.4%	13.9%	1.7%	72.0%	15.5%+

+Percentages may not total 100% due to roundings.

Although relatively few students--approximately one-sixth of them--wrote competent or better responses, that is, responses that contained a clear expression of feelings, slightly over seven-tenths of the students wrote responses that were at least minimally acceptable.

Responses to the "Rainy Day" essay were also scored for cohesion. As mentioned previously, cohesive ties are the devices writers use to link ideas and give their essays coherence. There are many kinds of cohesive ties and strategies, some of which are illustrated in the cohesion scoring guide for "Rainy Day," shown in Appendix B. The cohesion scoring guide describes four levels of competence. The

lowest level (level 1) response contains clauses and sentences not connected beyond pairings. Level 2 responses show an attempt at gathering details but very little would be lost if the details were rearranged. In level 3 responses, details are gathered and ordered but there are sections of details that stand apart as sections. In level 4 papers, the number and variety of cohesion strategies used bind the details and sections into a wholeness.

Table 11 shows percentages at various cohesion score levels on the "Rainy Day" item. Results are given for levels 3 and 4 combined but levels 2, 3 and 4 are not combined because level 2 papers are not really cohesive. About 42% wrote papers judged as cohesive.

Table 11. Percentages of 13-year-olds at Each Cohesion Score Level, "Rainy Day" Exercise.

Non-rateable	No Cohesion	Attempts at Cohesion	Cohesion	Coherence	Competent or Better
0	1	2	3	4	3 & 4
0.6%	5.6%	51.8%	36.9%	5.0%	41.9%+

+Percentages may not total 100% due to roundings.

As can be seen from examining the primary trait and cohesion scores (Tables 10 and 11, respectively), 13-year-olds were more adept at writing cohesive responses than at defining and explaining a feeling using a structure and elaborated details. Many fewer students were found at level 1 on the cohesion scale and the percentage of level 3 or 4 cohesion responses was substantially higher. The same trend was seen at age 9--26% of the 9-year-olds scored 3 or better on the primary trait for their essay but 43% scored 3 or better on cohesion.

Thirteen-year-olds' greater facility at writing cohesive responses is supported by a comparison of their scores on the two scales. As seen in Table 12, almost all

the students had cohesion scores identical to or higher than their primary trait scores. Nearly half had the same scores; almost half had higher cohesion scores. About 20% who were judged 2 on the primary trait received a 3 for cohesion. Also, 9% of those who did not express feelings at all (primary trait level 1) still wrote papers judged cohesive (levels 3 or 4).

Table 12. Comparison of 13-year-olds' Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores, "Rainy Day" Exercise.

		Cohesion Scores			
		1	2	3	4
Primary Trait Scores	1	3.3%	15.5%	8.2%	0.4%
	2	2.3	33.1	19.9	1.2
	3	--	3.2	8.9	1.8
	4[1]	--	--	--	1.7

[1]All level 4 primary trait papers received a 4 on the cohesion scale because coherence was a necessary condition for a level 4 primary trait rating.

Differences for males and females followed a pattern similar to that seen for 9-year-olds, except that the female advantage on the primary trait scale did not appear to be as strong at age 13. As seen in Table 13, significant differences in favor of females existed only at level 4 on both scales. On the primary trait scale, more males than females were found in category 1, and, correspondingly, more females wrote papers rated either 2, 3, or 4. However, the difference between males and females was not significant when the upper two primary trait score points were combined. Except for level 4, cohesion ratings for the two sexes were much the same.

Table 13. Results for Male and Female 13-year-olds, Primary Trait and Cohesion Scales, "Rainy Day" Exercise.

Primary Trait Score	All DoDDS Students	Males[1]	Females[1]
1	27.4%	31.1% (3.6*)	23.9% (-3.5*)
2	56.4	54.1 (-2.4)	58.7 (2.3)
3	13.9	13.8 (0.0)	13.9 (0.0)
4	1.7	0.3 (-1.4*)	3.0 (1.4*)
3 & 4 combined	15.5	14.1 (-1.4)	16.9 (1.4)
2, 3 & 4 combined	71.9	68.2 (-3.8*)	75.6 (3.7*)
Cohesion Score			
1	5.6%	6.8% (1.2)	4.5% (-1.1)
2	51.8	52.2 (0.4)	51.4 (-0.4)
3	36.9	36.8 (-0.1)	37.0 (0.1)
4	5.0	3.4 (-1.6*)	6.6 (1.6*)
3 & 4 combined	41.9	40.2 (-1.7)	43.6 (1.7)

[1]Numbers in parentheses indicate difference from the overall percentage. Positive numbers indicate a performance above and negative numbers a performance below the overall percentage.

*Indicates difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Language spoken in the home did not appear to be related to primary trait scores on this item. There is some evidence that language spoken in the home was related to cohesion scores. When score points 2, 3 and 4 were combined, those from homes where English was not spoken when children were young were 7.6 percentage points below the percentage for all DoDDS students. However, significant differences did not occur when score points 3 and 4 were combined.

Those who had been in the DoDDS system for three or more years did better than all DoDDS students when cohesion scores of 2, 3 and 4 were combined; this difference did not appear when only those in score points 3 and 4 were combined. No significant differences were found for number of years in DoDDS for primary trait scores.

Subordination skills—the processes by which good writers embed information in their sentences—were measured through sentence combining items. Students were presented with the following sets of simple sentences and asked to combine each set into one sentence with the same meaning as the original sentences.

Part A. Her cries were lost in the storm.
Her cries were thin.
Her cries were small.

Part B. A guard kept the children from touching the animals.
The guard was bored.
The guard was at the doorway.
The animals were dusty.
The animals were stuffed.
The animals were in the museum display.

Part C. The lookout was frightened.
He was clinging to the mast.
He realized the tidal wave would swamp the ship.
The wave would send it plunging to the depths.

The complete items and instructions to respondents are found in Appendix A.

General scoring criteria for these items were the same as those used for 9-year-olds. To be correct, responses could contain only one T-unit. (A T-unit

is a main clause with all its attendent modifying words, phrases and dependent clauses.) Second, responses were scored for lexical content--whether additions to or omissions of the given content had occurred. Third, responses were scored for syntax--whether the combined sentence had a meaning that was the same as, or at least not prohibited by, the meaning of the original sentences without becoming awkward or stylistically inept. For a correct response, students had to use only one T-unit, preserve the given content without adding to it and retain the meaning of the original sentences. The complete scoring guides for these items are found in Appendix B.

Performance on the sentence combining tasks was highly dependent on the nature and complexity of the sentences being combined. Table 14 summarizes percentage of correct responses on these tasks.

For Part A, since the noun is repeated in each sentence, the most apparent combining strategy is simply to use adjectives to modify the noun, although in this case transposed or post-noun modification (e.g., Her cries, thin and small, were lost in the storm.) would also be correct. About 7 of every 10 13-year-olds successfully combined these sentences.

Part B also required modification combining strategies but was more difficult in that two nouns (guard and animals) were involved, the number of modifiers was greater and each noun required both pre-noun and post-noun modification. The percentage of acceptable responses reflected the increased difficulty of the task, dropping to 42%.

Part C was much more complex because there were many acceptable options, employing both embedding and intra-T-unit conjoining, that could be used. One-quarter of the 13-year-olds accomplished this task successfully.

Table 14. Percentages of 13-year-olds Responding Correctly to Sentence Combining Items.

	Percentage of 13-year-olds responding correctly
Part A	71.4%
Part B	41.5
Part C	24.7
At least one correct	75.1
At least two correct	45.0
All three correct	17.6

For all three tasks, many students combined the elements into one T-unit but made errors either in lexical usage (added or omitted elements) or in syntax (change of meaning). Others attempted to combine the sentences but used two or more T-units (Table 15).

Table 15. Percentages of 13-year-olds Making Various Errors on Sentence Combining Tasks.

	Part A	Part B	Part C
Used one T-unit and correct syntax, made lexical errors	2.7%	12.8%	8.3%
Used one T-unit and correct lexicon, made syntax errors	11.5	4.3	4.4
Used one T-unit, made both lexical and syntax errors	3.7	9.5	9.1
Used more than one T-unit	5.4	26.0	45.5

Although not always statistically significant, differences on sentence combining tasks uniformly favored females, as seen in Table 16.

Table 16. Results for Male and Female 13-year-olds, Sentence Combining Items.

	All 13-year-olds	Male[1]	Female[1]
Part A	71.4%	67.9% (-3.5*)	74.8% (3.4*)
Part B	41.5	38.6 (-2.9)	44.3 (2.8)
Part C	24.7	22.7 (-2.0)	26.7 (2.0)
At least 1 correct	75.1	73.4 (-1.8)	76.8 (1.7)
At least 2 correct	45.0	41.0 (-4.0*)	48.9 (3.9*)
All three correct	17.6	14.9 (-2.7)	20.2 (2.6)

[1]Numbers in parentheses give the difference from the overall score. Positive numbers indicate performance above the overall level and negative numbers below it.

Students whose families did not speak English in the home before the student's schooling began were more likely to have difficulty with the sentence combining tasks than either those whose families spoke English or those whose families spoke both English and another language. Students from non-English-speaking families were 16, 12 and 9 percentage points below the overall DoDDS percentages on parts A, B and C, respectively. Thirty-two percent of those from non-English-speaking homes answered 2 or more of these items correctly compared with 45% of all DoDDS students.

Number of years spent in DoDDS schools did appear to be related to sentence combining performance, although the relationship was not linear. As seen in Table 17, those who had been in the DoDDS system less than a year did about as well as all DoDDS students, those who had been in the system 1-2 years did worse while those who had been in the system 3 years or more did better.

Table 17. Differences in Percentages Among 13-year-olds Attending DoDDS Schools for Different Lengths of Time, Sentence Combining Items.

	Overall Percentage	Difference from Overall Percentage by Years in DoDDS System+		
		Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3 or more years
Part A	71.4%	-1.6%	-5.3%*	3.8%*
B	41.5	0.7	-4.0	3.1
C	24.7	2.0	-3.3	2.0
1 or more correct	75.1	0.7	-3.3	2.2
2 or more correct	45.0	-1.0	-6.6*	4.9*
All 3 correct	17.6	1.4	-2.8	1.8

+A positive difference indicates performance above the overall level; a negative difference describes performance below it.

Table 18 shows a comparison of primary trait and cohesion scores with sentence combining performance. For both scales, the first column shows the total percentage of the DoDDS sample in a particular score point and the other columns show the percent of the total sample getting 0, 1, 2 or 3 of the sentence combining tasks right. In addition, the percentages in parentheses show the percentages of those <u>in that score point</u> getting various numbers of sentences correct. To obtain these percentages, each score point is separately considered as 100%.

Table 18. Comparison of 13-year-olds' Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores with Sentence Combining Performance.

Primary Trait Scale[1]	Total % in Score Point	Got 0 Sentence Combining tasks right	(% of Score Point)[2]	Got 1 Sentence Combining task right	(% of Score Point)	Got 2 Sentence Combining Task Right	(% of Score Point)	Got 3 Sentence Combining Task Right	(% of Score Point)
1	27.4%	9.7%	(35%)	8.3%	(30%)	6.3%	(23%)	3.1%	(11%)
2	56.4	13.6	(24%)	17.6	(31%)	15.1	(27%)	10.1	(18%)
3	13.9	1.0	(7%)	3.5	(25%)	5.1	(37%)	4.2	(30%)
4	1.7	0.1	(5%)	0.6	(35%)	0.8	(47%)	0.1	(5%)
Cohesion Scale[1]									
1	5.6%	2.4%	(43%)	1.8%	(32%)	1.0%	(18%)	0.4%	(7%)
2	51.8	14.0	(27%)	16.2	(31%)	14.5	(28%)	7.2	(14%)
3	36.9	7.7	(21%)	10.3	(28%)	10.4	(28%)	8.6	(23%)
4	5.0	0.4	(8%)	1.8	(36%)	1.4	(28%)	1.4	(28%)

[1]The total percentage of DoDDS students does not total 100% because some essays were nonrateable.

[2]Percentages of score points may not total 100% due to rounding error.

As seen in Table 18, higher percentages of those in the lower score points did not answer sentence combining items correctly. However, a larger proportion of those in score level 3 than level 4 on the primary trait scale answered two or three sentence combining tasks successfully. On the cohesion scale, proportions of those in score levels 3 and 4 who answered two or three sentence combining tasks correctly were fairly similar, but a far smaller proportion of those in score level 4 failed to answer any sentence combining tasks at all correctly. Thus, performance on the essay task did appear to be related to performance on the sentence combining tasks, but the highest performance on the essay scales did not necessarily result in the highest performance on the sentence combining tasks. Similarly, differences in the proportion of the various score levels getting different numbers of sentence combining tasks right

were not always large and did not uniformly favor the higher performing groups on the essay item.

Besides actually writing, 13-year-olds also answered a number of questions about how much writing they do, what kinds of instruction they have had and how they feel about writing. The results (Table 19) prompt the following observations:

- One in five 13-year-olds reported doing none or one paper during the last six weeks. Nearly half had written 2 to 4 papers.
- Thirty-nine percent reported that little or no English class time is devoted to writing instruction. Seventy percent said the amount of instruction is one-third of the class time or less.
- Forty-six percent of the students said they usually are encouraged to jot down ideas or take notes before writing a paper; 32% said they usually are encouraged to make an outline.
- About one-third of the students receive written suggestions from their teachers; a slightly higher percentage -- 37% -- said their teachers usually discussed their papers with them.
- The vast majority - 85% - of the 13-year-olds usually or sometimes enjoy writing assignments.

Table 19. Responses to Questions about Writing Instruction, Age 13

How many reports and essays written during the last six weeks as part of any school assignment?		
	0	6.9%
	1	12.6
	2-4	48.5
	5-10	24.5
	More than 10	4.9
Time spent in English class on instruction in writing?		
	None	4.0%
	Little	34.5
	1/3 of time	32.3
	1/2 of time	18.7
	Most of time	10.2
Encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes before writing?		
	Usually	46.0%
	Sometimes	46.5
	Never/No papers written	7.1
Encouraged to make outlines before writing?		
	Usually	32.4%
	Sometimes	47.3
	Never/No papers written	20.0
Do you write a paper more than once before turning it in?		
	Usually	49.2%
	Sometimes	42.3
	Never/No papers written	8.5

Table 19. (continued)

When papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?

Usually	32.9%
Sometimes	52.6
Never/No papers written	14.4

When papers are returned, do teachers discuss them with you?

Usually	37.4%
Sometimes	52.2
Never/No papers written	10.4

After a paper is returned, do you work on it again to improve it?

Usually	13.8%
Sometimes	52.7
Never/No papers written	33.5

Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?

Usually	29.9%
Sometimes	55.2
Never/No papers written	14.9

A comparison of males' and females' responses to these questions shows that classtime spent on writing instruction and the number of essays written are about the same for males and females. Females at age 13 are more likely than males to be encouraged to jot notes before writing and to write papers more than once before turning them in. While girls do not say that they usually get written suggestions or discuss their work with teachers more often than boys, they are more prone to say they get this type of help "sometimes" than boys are. Females display much more enjoyment of writing than males. Thirty-eight percent of the females compared with 22% of the males said that they "usually" enjoyed writing assignments; 20% of the boys but only 10% of the girls said they never enjoyed writing assignments.

Language spoken in the home and number of years spent in DoDDS schools did not appear to have a relationship to instructional experiences or feelings about writing. Very few significant differences in responses occurred for any of these students in the different categories for these variables.

Comparison of Results for DoDDS 13-year-olds and the Nation

At age 13, DoDDS students again fared better than students in the United States, as measured by NAEP, on writing tasks. In writing about their feelings on a rainy day, DoDDS students did better than the nation on both the primary trait and cohesion scales (Table 20).

Table 20. Comparison of Primary Trait and Cohesion Score for 13-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Rainy Day" Exercise.

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
Primary Trait Score			
1	33.2%	27.4%	-5.8*
2	60.1	56.4	-3.7
3	5.7	13.9	8.1*
4	0.5	1.7	1.2*
3 & 4 combined	6.2	15.5	9.3*
2, 3 & 4 combined	66.3	71.9	5.7*
Cohesion Score Level			
1	16.4%	5.6%	-10.7*
2	62.6	51.8	-10.8*
3	18.8	36.9	18.2*
4	1.7	5.0	3.3*
3 & 4 combined	20.5	41.9	21.5*

+ Positive difference means higher DoDDS percentage; negative difference shows a higher national percentage.

* Indicates difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

The pattern of differences for 9- and 13-year-olds on their respective essays was very similar. This would tend to support the conclusion that there are distinct differences in the writing abilities of DoDDS students and the nation. DoDDS students were less likely than the nation to appear in the lowest primary trait category or the lowest two cohesion categories. At both ages, for both DoDDS students and the nation, percentages in a particular cohesion category are generally higher than those in the corresponding primary trait category. But DoDDS 13-year-olds were two and one-half times as likely as the nation to appear in the two highest primary trait categories and about twice as likely to be found in the two highest cohesion categories.

DoDDS 13-year-olds also outperformed their counterparts in the United States on sentence combining tasks although as for 9-year-olds, differences were not as great as for the essay writing item (Table 21).

Table 21. Comparison of 13-year-old DoDDS Students' Performance and the Nation, Sentence Combining Items.

	Percent Correct		
	Nation	DoDDS	Difference[1]
Part A Cries	66.0%	71.4%	5.4*
B Guard	32.5	41.5	9.1*
C Lookout	19.9	24.7	4.9*
One or more correct	68.9	75.1	6.2*
Two or more correct	35.6	45.0	9.4*
All three correct	13.8	17.6	3.7*

[1] A positive difference indicates a higher DoDDS performance; a negative difference indicates a higher national percentage.

Differences were all significant, ranging from 5 to 9 percentage points in favor of DoDDS students. Differences in types of errors reported for these items were not large or consistent across the three tasks. DoDDS 13-year-olds showed a slightly higher tendency than the nation to generate sentences than had two

instead of one T-unit but were otherwise free of lexical or syntax errors.

Do differences in instructional experiences have any bearing on the observed differences in writing skills between DoDDS and the nation.

There are some distinct differences in instructional experiences, as reported by the students (Table 22). DoDDS 13-year-olds write more papers and spend more English class time in actual writing instruction than do their stateside counterparts. In addition, more DoDDS students said they usually receive written suggestions on their papers, discuss papers with their teachers and are encouraged to jot notes and make outlines. More DoDDS students than the nation said they usually wrote papers more than once before turning them in, but DoDDS students and the national population of 13-year-olds shared a similar disinclination to rework papers after they were returned.

Striking differences appeared in students' reactions to the task of writing. Three of 10 DoDDS students said they usually enjoy writing assignments compared with 2 of 10 in the nation. Approximately one-quarter of the nation's 13-year-olds never enjoy writing compared with only 15% of the DoDDS students.

Ideally, a complete writing program would include 1) prewriting instruction, 2) oral and written feedback on papers, 3) encouragement to write several drafts of papers and 4) opportunities to work on papers after they have been reviewed by teachers. DoDDS students were more likely to engage in these activities than the nation (Table 23). For example, approximately one-fourth of the DoDDS students indicated that three or four of these activities were a part of their writing program compared with 20% of the nation.

Table 22. Comparison of Writing Instructional Experiences of 13-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation.

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
How many reports and essays written during last six weeks as part of any school assignment?			
0-1	32.8%	19.5%	-13.3*
2-5	45.3	56.4	11.1*
6-10	10.6	16.5	6.0*
more than 10	3.6	4.9	1.3
Time spent in English class on instruction in writing?			
None or little	44.1%	38.5%	-6.0*
1/3 of time	31.4	32.2	0.8
1/2 or most of time	23.6	28.9	5.2*
Encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes before writing?			
Usually	40.9%	46.0%	5.2*
Sometimes	47.1	46.5	-0.5
Never/No papers written	11.0	7.0	-3.9*
Encouraged to make outlines before writing?			
Usually	27.5%	32.4%	4.9*
Sometimes	46.4	47.3	.9
Never/No papers written	24.5	20.0	-4.5*
Do you write a paper more than once before turning it in?			
Usually	40.6%	49.2%	8.6*
Sometimes	45.5	42.3	-3.2
Never/No papers written	13.9	8.5	-5.4*
When papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?			
Usually	26.3%	33.0%	6.6*
Sometimes	56.1	52.6	-3.5
Never/No papers written	17.5	14.4	-3.2*

When papers are returned, do teachers discuss them with you?			
Usually	31.2%	37.4%	6.2*
Sometimes	52.6	52.2	-0.4
Never/No papers written	16.2	10.4	-5.8*
After a paper is returned, do you work on it again to improve it?			
Usually	13.7%	13.8%	0.1
Sometimes	50.5	52.7	2.1
Never/No papers written	35.8	33.5	-2.3
Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?			
Usually	20.4%	29.9%	9.5*
Sometimes	53.6	55.2	1.6
Never/No papers written	25.1	14.9	-10.1*

Table 23. Comparison of 13-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation Engaging in Various Numbers of Writing Instructional Activities

Activities:

Prewriting (jot notes or make outline)

Write paper more than once

Receive teacher suggestions (oral or written)

Rework paper following suggestions

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference
Participate in at least one of the above	83.0%	90.6%	7.6*
Participate in at least two of the above	51.4	59.9	8.5*
Participate in at least three of the above	19.9	25.6	5.7*

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS FOR 17-YEAR-OLDS

Performance of 17-Year-Old DoDDS Students

DoDDS 17-year-olds were asked to complete two writing samples--one an expressive essay and the other a persuasive piece. The expressive essay was scored for achievement of the primary trait and for cohesion; the persuasive task was scored only for accomplishment of the primary trait. In addition, 17-year-olds answered questions about their instructional experiences with writing.

Expressive writing involves writing primarily for fun or self-expression rather than some other purpose, such as explanation. Assessment of expressive writing permits a description of other than purely functional writing tasks and allows students to display their creative or expressive abilities as well as their facility in writing skills.

To display their expressive skills, 17-year-olds were asked to write a fictional narrative. The assignment was to look at a picture of a stork and write a story about it. The text of the assignment was:

> Look at the picture printed on the opposite page for awhile, and then make up a story about it. When you are ready, write your story. It may be helpful for you to start with one of the following lines, but you may begin in any way you wish.
>
> Possible First Lines
>
> "I'm telling you, Henry, if you don't get rid of that thing, it's going to eat up the cat!"
>
> "But, Mother, I <u>am</u> telling the truth! It laid an egg in the Chevy."
>
> "Last night a very odd-looking bird appeared in the neighborhood."

The picture and the item as the 17-year-olds saw it are found in the 17-year-olds' booklet in Appendix A.

Students were given approximately 25 minutes in which to write. In effect, they created first-draft, not polished or edited, narratives.

Since the instructions were to write a story, the papers were first scored in terms of storytelling skills. In particular, scorers were looking for a consistent point of view, sustained narrative structures and amplifying details. Papers were rated from a score of 1 (inadequate) to 4 (very good). Level 1 responses either simply provide a few descriptive details without a narrative framework or add a few details to the situation given in the instructions. In level 2 responses, a situation is invented to account for the bird, but the plot is not well-structured or detailed. Level 3 responses show a structured plot, elaborated with appropriate details; level 4 responses tell a complete story with appropriate details, and resolve it fully and consistently. The complete scoring guide for this item appears in Appendix B.

In this scoring of the papers, the focus was on rhetorical competence, not on mechanics, spelling and so forth. Primary trait scoring is only concerned with the percentages of students displaying the narrative skills elicited by the exercise. Those skills -- control of point of view, ability to sustain an explanatory framework and ability to use details in order to advance a narrative or make it entertaining -- are as useful in nonfiction writing as they are in fiction. Although one cannot conclude that students who do poorly on this task will never display such skills on some other, less inventive task, one probably can conclude that students who do well on this task are likely to have those skills available for other kinds of writing.

Nearly three-quarters of the 17-year-olds' papers were scored 3 or 4, indicating that the vast majority have access to these skills (Table 24).

Table 24. Percentages of 17-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Stork" Exercise.

Nonrateable	Inadequate	Some Storytelling	Storytelling	Full Storytelling	Marginal or Better	Competent or Better
0	1	2	3	4	2, 3, 4	3 & 4
0.1%	2.1%	24.3%	64.5%	9.0%	97.8%	73.5%+

+Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Even higher percentages were successful in composing papers that were cohesive. The cohesion scoring guide, also a four-point scale, was the same as that used for 9- and 13-year-olds' essays. As for the other ages, a score of 1 signifies a noncohesive response, while level 4 signifies a completely unified presentation. In a level 2 paper, details are gathered but little would be lost if they were rearranged; a level 3 response contains details that are gathered and organized but sections of the paper are not necessarily unified.

Table 25 shows percentages of 17-year-olds responding in the various cohesion score points.

Table 25. Percentages of 17-year-olds at Each Cohesion Score Level, "Stork" Exercise.

Nonrateable	Inadequate	Attempts at Cohesion	Cohesion	Cohesion and Coherence	Cohesion or Better
0	1	2	3	4	3 & 4
0.1%	-	12.7%	73.2%	14.0%	87.2%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Only 13% of the 17-year-olds failed to tell a story in a manner that was at least coherent.

A comparison of students' primary trait and cohesion scores shows that, as would be expected from scores on the two scales separately, most students either scored the same on the two scales or did better on the cohesion than the primary trait rating (Table 26).

Table 26. Comparison of 17-year-olds' Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores, "Stork" Exercise.

Primary Trait Scores	Cohesion Scores 1	2	3	4
1	-	2.1%	- %	- %
2	-	9.9	14.2	0.1
3	-	0.7	59.0	4.8
4[1]	-	-	-	9.0

[1]All level 4 primary trait papers received a 4 on the cohesion scale because coherence was a necessary condition for a level 4 primary trait rating.

Females' performance was superior to males' on this task for both primary trait and cohesion scores, although the difference was somewhat more marked for the primary trait ratings (Table 27). More males than females were found in the lowest two primary trait levels and in level 2 for cohesion.

Table 27. Results for Male and Female 17-year-olds, Primary Trait and Cohesion Scales, "Stork" Exercise.

	All 17-year-olds	Male[1]	Female[1]
Primary Trait Score			
3 and 4 combined	73.5%	66.8% (-6.7*)	80.2% (6.8*)
2, 3 and 4 combined	97.7	96.6 (-1.1*)	98.9 1.1*)
Cohesion Score			
3 and 4 combined	87.2	83.9 (-3.2*)	90.4 (3.2*)

[1]Numbers in parentheses indicate difference from the overall percentage. Positive numbers indicate a performance above and negative numbers a performance below the overall percentage.
*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Seventeen-year-olds whose families did not speak English in the home before the children entered school showed a slightly different pattern of performance than those whose families spoke English or English and another language. The non-English-speaking group was considerably more likely than the others to be in score point 2 on the primary trait scale -- 39% of the people whose families didn't speak English in the home produced papers that received a primary trait rating of 2 compared with 24% of all DoDDS students. Fewer of the students from non-English-speaking homes than all DoDDS students were included when primary trait categories 3 and 4 were combined. This group was also below all DoDDS students on cohesion score point 4 -- 6% of those whose families did not speak English compared with 14% of all DoDDS students were found in this category. However, when cohesion score points 3 and 4 were combined, differences between the various language in the home groups were not significant.

Number of years spent in DoDDS schools did not result in any significant differences for 17-year-olds on either the primary trait or the cohesion scales for this exercise.

Expressive writing trains students in such skills as controlling point of view, role playing, elaborating and inventing. Persuasive writing trains them to be responsive to their audiences and to use a host of logical and argumentative strategies to present ideas and influence readers' views. Needless to say, good persuasive writing is often expressive, as well; humorous writing -- particularly satire -- can be very persuasive. So the skills required for expressive and persuasive writing often overlap each other and also overlap skills involved in explanatory discourse.

Seventeen-year-olds were asked to respond to the following persuasive task:

> Some high school students have proposed converting an old house into a recreation center where young people might drop in evenings for talk and relaxation. Some local residents oppose the plan on the grounds that the center would depress property values in the neighborhood and attract undesirable types. A public hearing has been called. Write a brief speech that you would make supporting or opposing the plan. Remember to take only ONE point of view. Organize your arguments carefully and be as convincing as possible. Space is provided below and on the next three pages.

The item as it appeared to students is found in Appendix A. Students were given approximately 15 minutes for this task.

There are many means by which the writers might attempt to sway this audience. They could appeal to general truths, to experience or to social values. They could marshall evidence about other such centers in an effort to be scientific, or they could attempt to appeal to the sympathies of the audience. Good writers will recognize the need to anticipate and defuse objections -- in other words, they will attend to both sides of the issue, but state a clear preference for their view. Accordingly, the scoring guide emphasized respondents' ability to define and defend a point of view. Level 1 papers either do not take a position or do not give reasons to support their arguments. Level 2 papers state or imply a position and present arguments but the arguments are not well-linked. Level 3 papers present a position and one substantially or two moderately developed lines of argument; level 4 papers present at least two moderately developed lines of argument, one of which supports the position and who which refutes possible objections. The complete text of the scoring guide appears in Appendix B. Table 28 displays the results.

Table 28. Percentages of 17-year-olds at Each Primary Trait Score Level, "Rec Center" Exercise.

Nonrateable 0	Not Persuasive 1	Minimally Persuasive 2	Persuasive 3	Fully Persuasive 4	Marginal or Better 2, 3 & 4	Competent or Better 3 & 4
0.4%	22.7%	54.9%	19.9%	1.8%	76.6%	21.7%+

+Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

This item proved much more difficult than the previously discussed task of writing a story about a pictured stork. Slightly over one-fifth of the papers were rated competent or better. If marginally competent papers (level 2) are included, slightly over three-fourths of the students performed the task at some level of competence. But the jump from marginal to competent or better papers is a big one. Outstanding papers, according to the criteria used, were rare.

Females again had significantly higher primary trait scores than males. Males were more likely to be scored at level 1 -- 28% of the males compared with 17% of the females -- while females predominated at level 3, which included 15% of the males and 25% of the females. When score points 3 and 4 and score points 2, 3 and 4 were combined, females outperformed males by about 11 percentage points in each case.

Strong patterns of performance did not emerge for differences in language spoken in the home prior to school or number of years in the DoDDS system. Those whose families had not spoken English were less likely than the other groups to score at primary trait level 4; when primary trait score points 3 and 4 were combined, those whose families spoke only English did slightly better than the other two groups. When score points 2, 3 and 4 were combined, differences were not significant. No significant differences by length of time in DoDDS schools

were found for individual primary trait score points or for score points 3 and 4 combined. When primary trait score points 2, 3 and 4 were combined, those in DoDDS schools for three years or longer were significantly above the overall percentage while the other two groups did not differ significantly above the overall percentage.

A comparison of primary trait results for the "Stork" and "Rec Center" essays bears out what might have been expected when scores were viewed separately -- many students had a lower primary trait score on "Rec Center" than on "Stork." Table 29 shows percentages in each combination of score points for the two items.

Table 29. Comparison of 17-year-olds' Primary Trait Scores on "Stork" and "Rec Center" Exercises.

	"Rec Center" Primary Trait Scores			
"Stork" Primary Trait Scores	1	2	3	4
1	1.7%	0.4%	- %	- %
2	7.8	13.4	3.4	0.3
3	11.6	38.1	12.6	1.1
4	1.7	3.0	4.0	0.4

Twenty-eight percent of the students had the same primary trait score on each essay; half were one score point lower on "Rec Center" than on "Stork" and 15% were two score points lower. Five percent scored one point higher on "Rec Center" than on "Stork."

Besides actually writing, like the 13-year-olds, 17-year-olds answered a number of questions about how much writing they do, what kinds of writing instruction they have had and how they feel about writing. The complete text of the questions appears in Appendix A. The results (Table 30) prompt a number of observations:

- Almost two-fifths of the students have written five or more papers during the last six weeks; only 16% reported writing one or no papers.
- Forty percent of the students said little or no time is spent on writing instruction in their English classes; 24% spend half or more of their English class time in writing instruction.
- Seventeen-year-olds are more likely to be encouraged to jot down notes and ideas before writing than to be encouraged to make outlines -- 59% usually are encouraged to jot notes while 45% usually are encouraged to make outlines.
- Half of the 17-year-olds usually receive written suggestions about their writing from their teachers. Far fewer -- 28% -- usually discuss their papers with their teachers, while 16% never discuss their papers with their teachers.
- Very few students usually work on a paper to improve it after it has been returned; 38% never do so.
- About one-fourth of the students usually enjoy writing assignments. Another 62% sometimes enjoy them.

Table 30. Responses to Questions about Writing Instruction, Age 17

How many reports and essays written during the last six weeks as part of any school assignment?		
	0	7.0%
	1	9.2
	2-4	43.0
	5-10	29.8
	10	10.0
Time spent in English class on instruction in writing?		
	None	4.5%
	Little	35.3
	1/3 of time	36.1
	1/2 of time	16.6
	Most of time	6.9
Encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes before writing?		
	Usually	58.7%
	Sometimes	36.1
	Never/No papers written	5.1
Encouraged to make outlines before writing?		
	Usually	45.4%
	Sometimes	43.6
	Never/No papers written	10.7
Do you write a paper more than once before turning it in?		
	Usually	63.9%
	Sometimes	31.0
	Never/No papers written	5.1
When papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?		
	Usually	49.6%
	Sometimes	43.2
	Never/No papers written	7.2
When papers are returned, do teachers discuss them with you?		
	Usually	27.8%
	Sometimes	56.7
	Never/No papers written	15.5

Table 30 (continued)

After a paper is returned, do you work on it again to improve it?	
Usually	15.1%
Sometimes	46.3
Never/No papers written	38.5
Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?	
Usually	24.3%
Sometimes	62.5
Never/No papers written	13.1

Seventeen-year-old males' and females' instructional experiences with writing appear to be fairly similar. They write approximately the same number of papers and spend about the same amount of class time in writing instruction. Teachers write suggestions and discuss papers with both sexes equally. Females are more likely to rewrite their papers before turning them in. Females are also much more likely to say that they enjoy writing -- 32% of them said that they usually enjoy writing assignments compared with 17% of the males.

Some differences were apparent when results were analyzed for language spoken in the home prior to schooling and number of years in the DoDDS system. Those whose families had not spoken English were more likely than the other two groups to have written 2-4 essays and less likely to have written 5-10 essays. Students whose families spoke English were somewhat less likely to discuss returned papers with their teachers and considerably less likely to work to improve their papers after they were returned than students whose families had not spoken English exclusively.

Those who had spent three or more years in the DoDDS system were more likely than the other groups to say they were usually encouraged to make outlines. Teacher

discussion of papers also showed some variation, with those who had spent less than one year in the system more likely to say teachers usually discussed papers with them, and those with three or more years in the system were more likely to say that they sometimes discussed papers with their teachers. However, when students saying they usually or sometimes discussed papers with their teachers were added together, percentages were much the same regardless of the time spent in the DoDDS system. Those in DODDS schools less than one year were more likely to say they usually worked to improve papers after they were returned while those attending DoDDS schools for one to two years were more likely to say they never tried to improve returned papers.

Comparison of Results for DoDDS 17-Year-Olds and the Nation

The differences in performance between DoDDS 17-year-olds and students in the continental United States, as measured by NAEP, were not as striking as those seen at the younger ages. In fact, for the expressive essay about the stork, in which students were asked to generate a fictional narrative, no significant differences were seen for either the primary trait or the cohesion scales (Table 31).

Table 31. Comparison of Primary Trait and Cohesion Scores for 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Stork" Exercise.

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
Primary trait score level			
1	1.1%	2.1%	1.0
2	23.1	24.3	1.1
3	64.7	64.5	- 0.2
4	10.2	9.0	- 1.1
3 & 4 combined	74.8	73.5	- 1.4
2, 3 & 4 combined	98.0	97.7	- 0.2
Cohesion score level			
1	- %	- %	-
2	12.1	12.7	0.6
3	70.9	73.2	2.3
4	15.5	14.0	- 1.5
3 & 4 combined	86.4	87.2	0.8

+A positive number indicates a higher percentage of DoDDS students in the category; a negative difference means that the national percentage was higher than that for DoDDS students.

The lack of differences may reflect the fact that this proved to be a relatively easy exercise and thus may not discriminate well between different levels of writing ability.

However, even on the "Rec Center" exercise, which resulted in considerably lower scores, differences between DoDDS students and the nation were not as large as those seen for the younger ages. DoDDS students did, however, show an advantage over their stateside counterparts. A comparison of 17-year-olds' results on this item appears in Table 32.

Table 32. Comparison of Primary Trait Scores for 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation, "Rec Center" Exercise.

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
Primary trait score			
1	25.2%	22.7%	- 2.5
2	57.5	54.9	- 2.6
3	14.5	20.0	5.4*
4	0.6	1.8	1.2*
3 & 4 combined	15.2	21.7	6.6*
2, 3 & 4 combined	72.7	76.6	3.9

+A positive number indicates a higher percentage of DoDDS students in the category; a negative difference means that the national percentage was higher than that for DoDDS students.

*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Larger percentages of DoDDS students than the nation were found in the two highest score categories; however, the difference was not significant when results for the three highest categories were combined. In should be noted that a majority of both the NAEP and DoDDS students were found in level 2 on this task. The difference seen at the higher levels may indicate that the differences are in the top range of writing ability, although about the same numbers are able to produce a marginally competent piece of work.

Table 33 displays responses of 17-year-old DoDDS students and 17-year-olds in the nation to questions about instructional experiences with writing. Differences on some questions were not as great as those seen for 13-year-olds. Like the 13-year-olds, DoDDS 17-year-olds appear to write more papers than the nation, but differences in the amount of class time spent in writing instruction and the extent of teacher feedback (written suggestions or discussions with teachers when papers are returned) are not evident at age 17 although they were for 13-year-olds.

Table 33. Comparison of Writing Instructional Experiences of 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation.

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
How many reports and essays written during last six weeks as part of any school assignment?			
0-1	26.3%	16.2%	-10.0*
2-5	49.9	53.3	3.4
6-10	14.6	19.5	4.9*
greater than 20	5.3	10.0	4.7*
Time spent in English class on instruction in writing?			
None or little	37.4%	39.8%	2.4
1/3 of time	37.1	36.1	- 1.0
1/2 or most of time	24.3	23.6	- 0.8
Encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes before writing?			
Usually	54.4%	58.7%	4.3*
Sometimes	35.1	36.1	1.0
Never/No papers written	7.7	5.1	- 2.6
Encouraged to make outlines before writing?			
Usually	49.4%	45.4%	- 4.0
Sometimes	35.5	43.6	8.1*
Never/No papers written	11.2	10.7	- 0.4
Do you write a paper more than once before turning it in?			
Usually	56.3%	63.9%	7.6*
Sometimes	35.9	31.0	- 5.0*
Never/No papers written	7.8	5.1	- 2.7*

+A positive difference indicates a higher DoDDS performance; a negative difference indicates a higher national performance.

*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 33. (continued)

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
When papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?			
Usually	48.0%	49.6%	1.6
Sometimes	44.2	43.2	- 1.0
Never/No papers written	7.7	7.2	- 0.6
When papers are returned, do teachers discuss them with you?			
Usually	27.0%	27.8%	0.7
Sometimes	57.1	56.7	- 0.4
Never/No papers written	15.9	15.5	- 0.3
After a paper is returned, do you work on it again to improve it?			
Usually	13.4%	15.1%	0.7
Sometimes	46.2	46.3	0.1
Never/No papers written	40.3	38.5	- 1.9
Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?			
Usually	20.6%	24.3%	3.7*
Sometimes	55.3	62.5	7.2*
Never/No papers written	24.1	13.1	-11.0*

+A positive difference indicates a higher DoDDS performance; a negative difference indicates a higher national performance.

*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

DoDDS students at both ages 13 and 17 appear to get more encouragement than students in the nation to jot notes or ideas and to make outlines before writing. DoDDS students are no more inclined than their counterparts in the nation to work to improve their papers after they are returned.

DoDDS students at both ages 13 and 17 appear to have much more favorable attitudes toward writing than the nation. At age 17, approximately 87% of the DoDDS students compared with about 76% of the students in the nation said they usually or sometimes enjoy writing assignments. Nearly one-quarter of the 17-year-olds in the nation said they never enjoy their writing assignments compared with only 13% of the DoDDS students.

A complete writing program would ideally include 1) prewriting instruction, 2) oral and written feedback on papers, 3) encouragement to write several drafts of papers and 4) opportunities to work on papers after they have been reviewed by teachers. Just over one-third of the DoDDS students indicated that three or four of these activities are a part of their writing program. Percentages of DoDDS students whose programs include various numbers of these steps and comparisons with percentages of the nation participating in different numbers of steps appear in Table 34. DoDDS students are more likely to participate in at least one or two steps than the nation's 17-year-olds; however, percentages participating in three or more activities are similar for DoDDS students and the nation.

Table 34. Comparison of 17-year-old DoDDS Students and the Nation Engaging in Various Numbers of Writing Instructional Activities

Activities:

Prewriting (jot notes or make outline)

Write paper more than once

Receive teacher suggestions (oral or written)

Rework paper following suggestions

	Nation	DoDDS	Difference+
Participate in at least one of the above	89.5%	93.6%	4.1*
Participate in at least two of the above	67.0	72.8	5.8*
Participate in at least three of the above	34.2	35.5	1.3

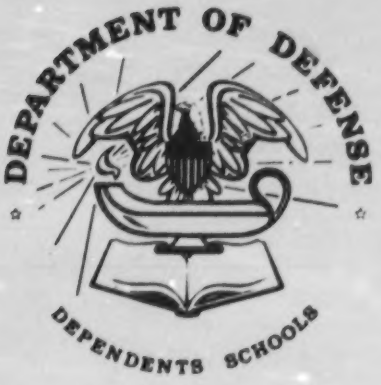
+A positive number indicates a higher percentage of DoDDS students in the category; a negative difference means that the national percentage was higher than that for DoDDS students.

*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

APPENDIX A

ASSESSMENT BOOKLETS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS



1979-80 ASSESSMENT

PACKAGE NO. 1

DO NOT WRITE OR MARK BELOW THIS LINE. A-9-1

Grade	Sex	Birthdate	School No.	Student ID No.
0 0	M	0 0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0 0
1 1	F	1 1 1 1	1 1 1	1 1 1 1
2 2		2 2 2 2	2 2 2	2 2 2 2
3 3		3 3 3 3	3 3 3	3 3 3 3
4 4		4 4 4 4	4 4	4 4 4 4
5 5		5 5 5 5	5 5	5 5 5 5
6 6		6 6 6 6	6 6	6 6 6 6
7 7		7 7 7 7	7 7	7 7 7 7
8 8		8 8 8 8	8 8	8 8 8 8
9 9		9 9 9 9	9 9	9 9 9 9

1. Below are some sets of short sentences. Each set can be improved by combining the given sentences into <u>one</u> sentence that says the same thing. For example, if the sentences were:

A cat chased the ball.
The cat was big.
It was gray.

You could write:

A big gray cat chased the ball.

After you hear each set read aloud, read the sentences silently to yourself and figure out a way to combine them into one sentence. Be sure your sentence has the same meaning as the sentences in the given set. Then write your sentence on the lines. The first two sets of sentences to be combined are located on the next page.

PLEASE CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE

1. (Continued)

A. Bill's coat was in the closet.

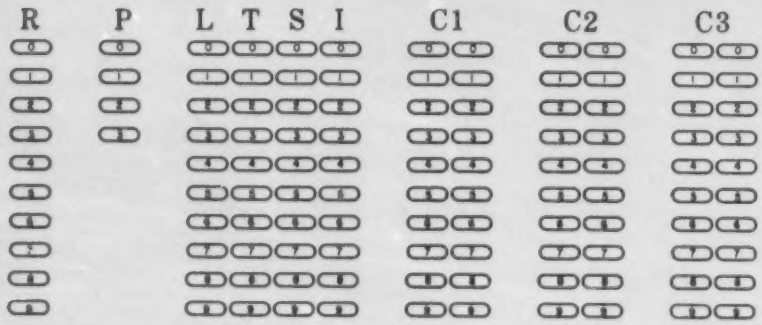
The coat was new.

It was leather.

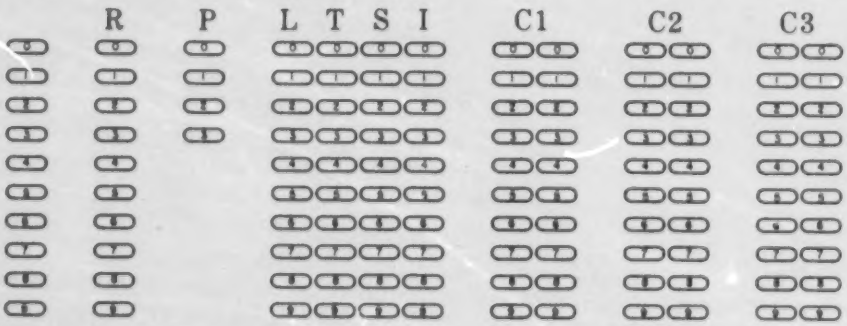
B. A rope was the clue to the mystery.

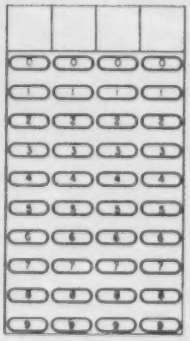
The rope was twisted.

The rope was hanging from a tree branch.



DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.





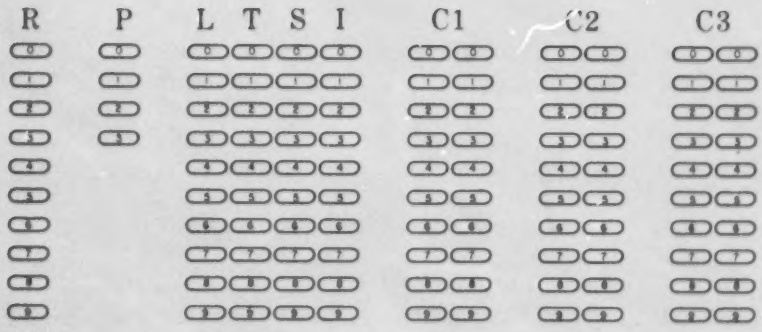
1. (Continued)

C. John knows a magician.

The magician is clever.

The magician can make an elephant disappear.

DO NOT CONTINUE
UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.



72

DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE NEXT EXERCISE

The next exercise in this booklet will be a long exercise, so you will have more time and more space for your answer. Your answer should be written or printed on the blank lines following the exercise. Please use as much of this space as you need.

2.

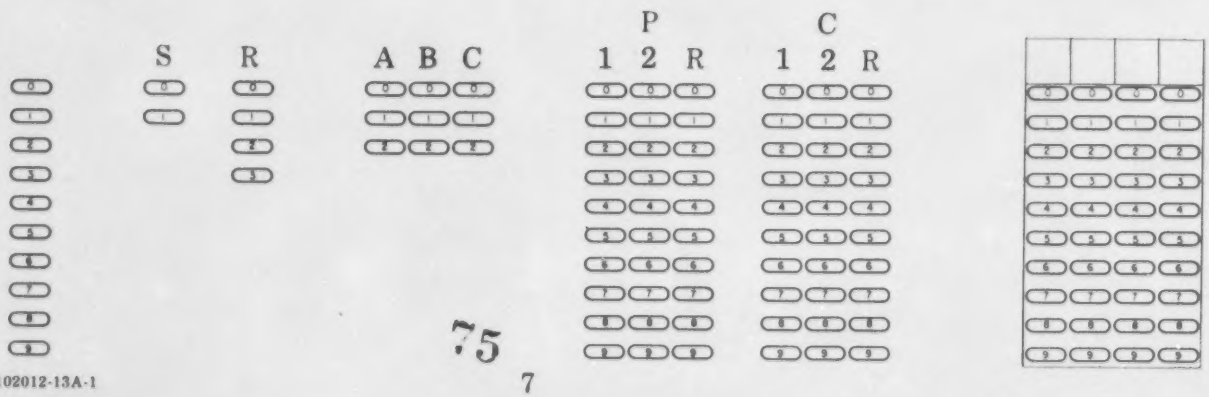
74

2. (Continued)

Here is a picture of a girl who is having fun in the summer. Look at the picture for a while. What do you think she is doing? What do you think she might do next?

Write a story that tells what the picture is about.

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.



2. (Continued)

STOP DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE LAST EXERCISE

The last exercise has seven questions. Each question has several possible answers following it.

Here is an example of this kind of question.

EXAMPLE

How many days are there in one week?

⬭ 5 days ⬭ 6 days ⬬ 7 days ⬭ I don't know.

The oval beside "7 days" has been filled in because there are seven days in one week.

Remember, fill in only <u>one</u> oval for each question. Fill in the oval COMPLETELY. If you change an answer, be sure to erase your first answer COMPLETELY.

The last exercise is on the back page. The administrator will help you with the questions.

DO NOT CONTINUE
UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

1. Does your family get a newspaper regularly?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

2. Does your family get any magazines regularly?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

3. Are there more than 25 books in your home?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

4. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

5. Before you started school, what language(s) did you speak most often at home?

   ⬭ English only

   ⬭ A language other than English

   ⬭ English and some other language

   ⬭ I don't know.

6. Is English the language spoken most often in your home now?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

7. Altogether, how long have you attended the Overseas Dependents Schools?

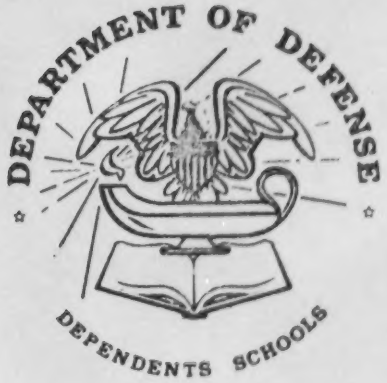
   ⬭ Less than 1 year

   ⬭ 1 to 2 years

   ⬭ 3 years or more

   ⬭ I don't know.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS



1979-80 ASSESSMENT

Package No. 1

DO NOT WRITE OR MARK BELOW THIS LINE. A-13-1

Grade	Sex	Birthdate	School No.	Student ID No.
	M F			

1. Below are some sets of short sentences. Each set can be improved by combining the given sentences into one sentence that says the same thing. For example, if the sentences were:

A cat chased the ball.

The cat was big.

It was gray.

You could write:

A big gray cat chased the ball.

After you hear each set read aloud, read the sentences silently to yourself and figure out a way to combine them into one sentence. Be sure your sentence has the same meaning as the sentences in the given set. Then write your sentence on the lines. Now here is the first set of sentences to be combined:

A. Her cries were lost in the storm.

Her cries were thin.

Her cries were small.

R P L T S I C1 C2 C3

STOP

DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

1. (Continued)

B. A guard kept the children from touching the animals.

The guard was bored.

The guard was at the doorway.

The animals were dusty.

The animals were stuffed.

The animals were in the museum display.

DO NOT CONTINUE
UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

R	P	L	T	S	I	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7		7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8		8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9		9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

1. (Continued)

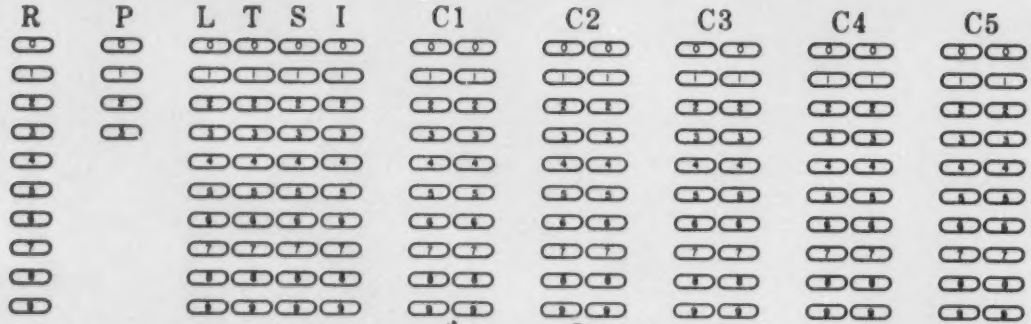
C. The lookout was frightened.

He was clinging to the mast.

He realized the tidal wave would swamp the ship.

The wave would send it plunging to the depths.

STOP DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.



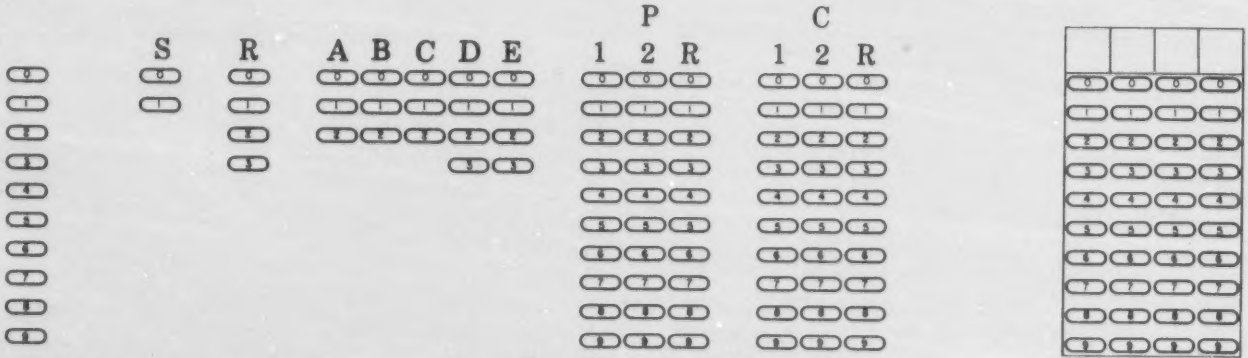
DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE NEXT EXERCISE

The next exercise in this booklet will be a long exercise, so you will have more time and more space for your answer. Your answer should be written or printed on the blank lines following the exercise. Please use as much of this space as you need.

2. Pretend that when you got up this morning, you looked out the window and saw that it was raining. How did you feel?

Think for a while about the feelings you have on a rainy morning. Then write a composition telling how a rainy <u>school</u> morning makes you feel.

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.



2. (Continued)

STOP DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE LAST EXERCISE

The last exercise in the booklet asks about your writing assignments in school. Remember, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers for these types of questions. We want to know how you honestly feel and what really happens when you do a writing assignment.

For Part A of the exercise, you will need to write your answer on the answer line following the question.

For Parts B through I, each question has several possible answers following it. Choose only ONE answer for each question. To indicate your answer, fill in the oval beside the answer that you choose. Be sure to fill in that oval COMPLETELY. If you change an answer, erase your first answer completely.

DO NOT CONTINUE
UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

3. A. How many reports and essays have you written during the last six weeks as part of any school assignment? _____

B. In the general English, literature or grammar classes you have taken during the past two years, about what part of the class time was spent on instruction in how to write reports and essays?

- ⬭ None of the time
- ⬭ Little of the time
- ⬭ About one-third of the time
- ⬭ About one-half of the time
- ⬭ Most of the time

C. Are you encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes about the topic of your paper before you write it?

Usually	Sometimes	Never	I haven't written any papers.
⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭

D. Are you encouraged to make outlines of your papers before you write them?

Usually	Sometimes	Never	I haven't written any papers.
⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭

PLEASE CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE

0-590020-A1A-2
(ref. 0-590030-A1A-3)

3. (Continued)

E. Do you write a paper more than once before you turn it in to your teachers?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

F. When your papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

G. When your papers are returned, do your teachers discuss them with you?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

H. After your papers are returned, do you work on the paper again to improve it?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

I. Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

DO NOT WRITE IN THE AREA BELOW.

AL	AK	AZ	AR
CA	CO	CT	DE
FL	GA	HI	ID
IL	IN	IA	KS
KY	LA	ME	MD
MA	MI	MN	MS
MO	MT	NB	NV
NH	NJ	NM	NY
NC	ND	OH	OK
OR	PA	RI	SC
SD	TN	TX	UT
VT	VA	WA	WV
WI	WY	DC	OT
BL	OC	BL	

1. Does your family get a newspaper regularly?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

2. Does your family get any magazines regularly?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

3. Are there more than 25 books in your home?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

4. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

5. Before you started school, what language(s) did you speak most often at home?

   ⬭ English only

   ⬭ A language other than English

   ⬭ English and some other language

   ⬭ I don't know.

6. Is English the language spoken most often in your home now?

   ⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

7. Altogether, how long have you attended the Overseas Dependents Schools?

   ⬭ Less than 1 year

   ⬭ 1 to 2 years

   ⬭ 3 years or more

   ⬭ I don't know.

8. Where did you live on your ninth birthday?

   ⬭ In the United States (Please specify the state or territory.)

   _____

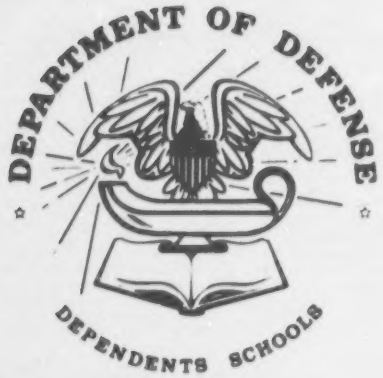
   ⬭ Outside the United States (Please specify the country.)

   _____

   ⬭ I don't know.

FORM NO. 7440

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS



1979-80 ASSESSMENT

PACKAGE NO. 1

DO NOT WRITE OR MARK BELOW THIS LINE. A-17-1

Grade	Sex	Birthdate	School No.	Student ID No.
00	M 1	0000	000	0000
01	F 2	1111	111	1111
02		2222	222	2222
03		3333	333	3333
04		4444	44	4444
05		5555	55	5555
06		6666	66	6666
07		7777	77	7777
08		8888	88	8888
09		9999	99	9999

DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE FIRST EXERCISE

The first exercise in this booklet will be a long exercise, so you will have plenty of time and space for your answer. Your answer should be written or printed on the blank lines following the exercise. Please use as much of this space as you need.

1.

92

1. (Continued)

Look at the picture printed on the opposite page for a while, and then make up a story about it. When you are ready, write your story. It may be helpful for you to start with one of the following lines, but you may begin in any way you wish.

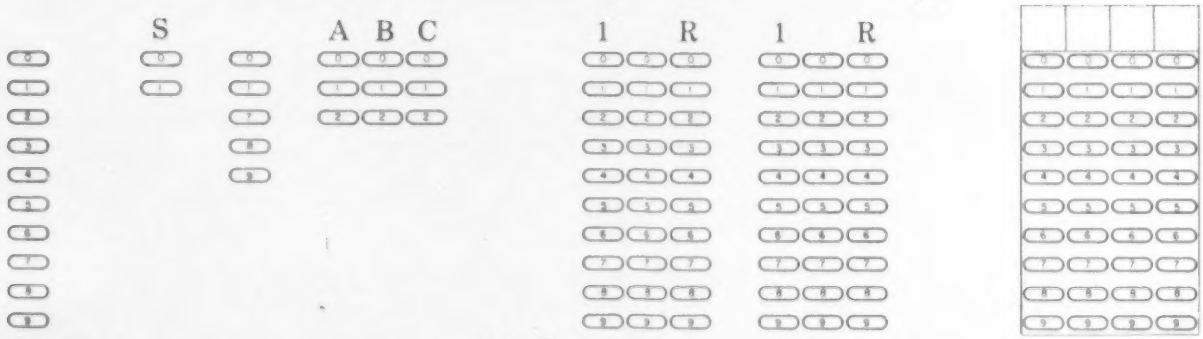
Possible First Lines

"I'm telling you, Henry, if you don't get rid of that thing, it's going to eat up the cat!"

"But, Mother, I <u>am</u> telling the truth! It laid an egg in the Chevy."

"Last night a very odd-looking bird appeared in the neighborhood."

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.



1. (Continued)

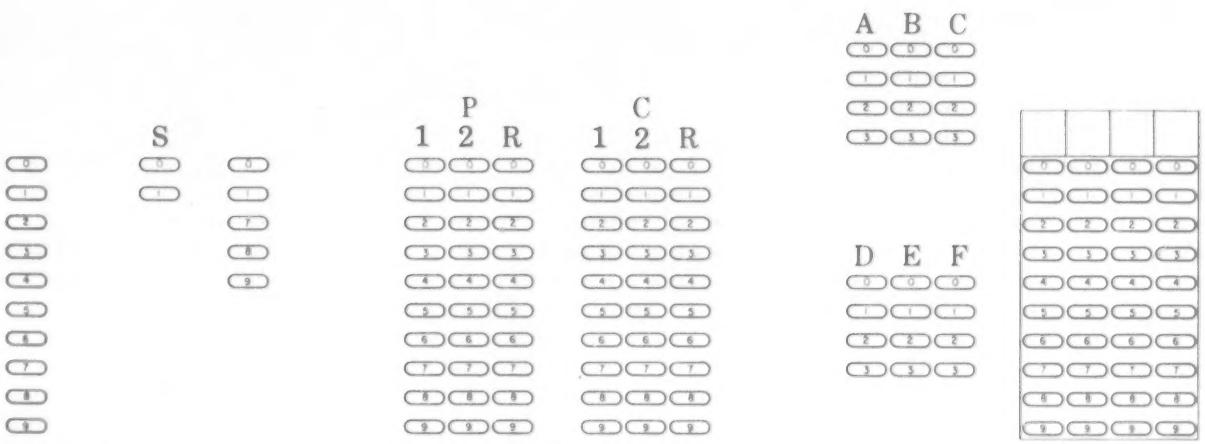
STOP DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE NEXT EXERCISE

The next exercise in this booklet will be another writing task, so you will have plenty of time and space for your answer. Your answer should be written or printed on the blank lines following the exercise. Please use as much of this space as you need.

2. Some high school students have proposed converting an old house into a recreation center where young people might drop in evenings for talk and relaxation. Some local residents oppose the plan on the grounds that the center would depress property values in the neighborhood and attract undesirable types. A public hearing has been called. Write a brief speech that you would make supporting or opposing the plan. Remember to take only ONE point of view. Organize your arguments carefully and be as convincing as possible. Space is provided below and on the next three pages.

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.



2. (Continued)

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.

2. (Continued)

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE.

2. (Continued)

STOP DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

DIRECTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE LAST EXERCISE

The last exercise in the booklet asks about your writing assignments in school. Remember, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers for these types of questions. We want to know how you honestly feel and what really happens when you do a writing assignment.

For Part A of the exercise, you will need to write your answer on the answer line following the question.

For Parts B through I, each question has several possible answers following it. Choose only ONE answer for each question. To indicate your answer, fill in the oval beside the answer that you choose. Be sure to fill in that oval COMPLETELY. If you change an answer, erase your first answer completely.

DO NOT CONTINUE
UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

100

3. A. How many reports and essays have you written during the last six weeks as part of any school assignment? _____

B. In the general English, literature or grammar classes you have taken during the past two years, about what part of the class time was spent on instruction in how to write reports and essays?

- ⬭ None of the time
- ⬭ Little of the time
- ⬭ About one-third of the time
- ⬭ About one-half of the time
- ⬭ Most of the time

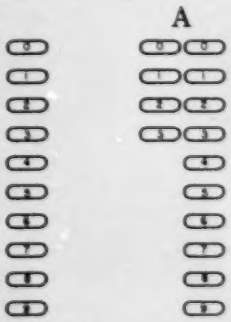
C. Are you encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes about the topic of your paper before you write it?

Usually	Sometimes	Never	I haven't written any papers.
⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭

D. Are you encouraged to make outlines of your papers before you write them?

Usually	Sometimes	Never	I haven't written any papers.
⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭

PLEASE CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE



101

3. (Continued)

E. Do you write a paper more than once before you turn it in to your teachers?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

F. When your papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

G. When your papers are returned, do your teachers discuss them with you?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

H. After your papers are returned, do you work on the paper again to improve it?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

I. Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?

Usually ⬭ Sometimes ⬭ Never ⬭ I haven't written any papers. ⬭

DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

0-590020-A1A-2
(ref. 0-590030-A1A-3)

1. Does your family get a newspaper regularly?

⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

2. Does your family get any magazines regularly?

⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

3. Are there more than 25 books in your home?

⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

4. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?

⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

5. Before you started school, what language(s) did you speak most often at home?

⬭ English only

⬭ A language other than English

⬭ English and some other language

⬭ I don't know.

6. Is English the language spoken most often in your home now?

⬭ Yes ⬭ No ⬭ I don't know.

7. Altogether, how long have you attended the Overseas Dependents Schools?

⬭ Less than 1 year

⬭ 1 to 2 years

⬭ 3 years or more

⬭ I don't know.

8. Where did you live on your ninth birthday?

⬭ In the United States (Please specify the state or territory.)

_____

⬭ Outside the United States (Please specify the country.)

_____

⬭ I don't know.

9. Where did you live on your thirteenth birthday?

⬭ In the United States (Please specify the state or territory.)

_____

⬭ Outside the United States (Please specify the country.)

_____

⬭ I don't know.

DO NOT WRITE IN THE AREA BELOW.

9 13

AL ⬭⬭
AK ⬭⬭
AZ ⬭⬭
AR ⬭⬭
CA ⬭⬭
CO ⬭⬭
CT ⬭⬭
DE ⬭⬭
FL ⬭⬭
GA ⬭⬭
HI ⬭⬭
ID ⬭⬭
IL ⬭⬭
IN ⬭⬭
IA ⬭⬭
KS ⬭⬭
KY ⬭⬭
LA ⬭⬭
ME ⬭⬭
MD ⬭⬭
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NY ⬭⬭
NC ⬭⬭
ND ⬭⬭
OH ⬭⬭
OK ⬭⬭
OR ⬭⬭
PA ⬭⬭
RI ⬭⬭
SC ⬭⬭
SD ⬭⬭
TN ⬭⬭
TX ⬭⬭
UT ⬭⬭
VT ⬭⬭
VA ⬭⬭
WA ⬭⬭
WV ⬭⬭
WI ⬭⬭
WY ⬭⬭
DC ⬭⬭
OT ⬭⬭
BL ⬭⬭
OC ⬭⬭
BL ⬭⬭

FORM NO 7482

APPENDIX B

SCORING GUIDES

COHESION SCORING GUIDE
(Developed for the 1978-79 Writing Assessment)
"FIREFLIES"

In scoring papers for cohesion, scorers need to be attentive not only to the incidence of cohesive ties but also to their successful ordering. Underlying and further strengthening these ties is syntactic repetition, both within and across sentences. The following example achieves cohesion by lexical cohesion, conjunction, reference, and substitution, and yet these various kinds of cohesion are both emphasized and related among themselves by numerous incidents of syntactic repetition:

> There is a girl who is catching fireflies. She is putting some into a jar. When she is finished, she will take them into a dark room and watch them glow. After that she will let them go so that they could lay eggs and there will be more fireflies for next year. Then she can catch them again year after year.

When both the incidence and ordering of cohesive ties pattern the entire piece of writing, the writer has created what we ordinarily call coherence.

Scoring Guide Categories:

1 = Little or no evidence of cohesion. Basicallly, clauses and sentences are not connected beyond pairings.

2 = Attempts at cohesion. There is evidence of gathering details but little or no evidence that these details are meaningfully ordered. In other words, very little seems lost if the details were rearranged.

3 = Cohesion. Details are both gathered and ordered. Cohesion is achieved in the ways illustrated briefly in the definition above. Cohesion does not necessarily lead to coherence, to the successful binding of parts so that the sense of the whole discourse is greater than the sense of its parts. In pieces of writing that are cohesive rather than coherent, there are large sections of details which cohere but these sections stand apart as sections.

4 = Coherence. While there may be a sense of sections within the piece of writing, the sheer number and variety of cohesion strategies bind the details and sections into a wholeness. This sense of wholeness can be achieved by a saturation of syntactic repetition throughout the piece (see description above) and/or by closure which retrospectively orders the entire piece and/or by general statements which organize the whole piece.

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

2 = Moderate to ample explanation, but little or no narrative invention. Essentially, these responses are longer versions of category "1" responses. They explain "what the picture is about" by providing moderate to ample (4 or more) details. They are not set in a story framework although some may include minimal attempts such as giving the girl a name or implying a cause and effect relationship or a time sequence. No matter the number of details or an attempt to get into a storytelling framework, these responses remain little more than discrete or disconnected answers to the questions posed in the stimulus.

3 = Imaginative explanation, by means of narrative invention. These papers invent details and cast them into a framework. They use several storytelling devices such as naming characters, setting scene, temporal or causal linking, dialogue, etc. However, they remain flawed in the sense that the stories are not sustained. For example: 1) they may begin with question answering before moving into storytelling, 2) they may set up a situation but the plot or narrative is only offered in bare outline form (no more than one or two bits of invented information), or 3) they may set up a situation and get into the story but either lapse out of storytelling into question answering or leave it unresolved, hanging in mid-air. In summary, the "3" responses explain the picture through storytelling but do not demonstrate full control.

4 = Imaginative explanation, by means of developed and controlled narrative invention. These responses explain the picture through a fully controlled and detailed story. They set the scene immediately, invent moderate to ample details not provided by the picture, cast the details into a narrative without lapses and provide a conclusion to their story.

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

TRAIT SCORING GUIDE
"FIREFLIES"

Rhetorical Mode: Expressive-Narrative

Primary Trait: Imaginative explanation by means of narrative invention.

Rationale of Primary Trait: This exercise presents two challenges to the writer. The first, introduced with the question, "What do you think she is doing?" asks the writer to explain. The second question, "What do you think she might do next?" introduces the problem of time and fiction which is confirmed by the directive, "Write a story." The two directives, then, require respondents to use the conventions and techniques of storytelling as a framework for inventing explanations of "what the picture is about."

General Scoring Rationale: Essentially readers should concentrate on whether the response only offers direct answers to the questions or whether it goes on to tell a story. Writers who only offer direct answers to the question(s) are scored "1" or "2"; those who go on to write a story reach the "3" or "4" level. A detailed, concrete description will earn a "2" while a less attractive, generalized narrative might earn a "3". The best papers tell a fully controlled and detailed story.

Some elements of the exercise are not relevant to the writing. Many children do not know what fireflies are. Readers must ignore the literal fact and accept the writer's interpretation when accounting for the actions. In addition, the introduction states that the girl is having fun; however, this thesis is insignificant and its inclusion is not necessary to complete the task.

Scoring Guide Categories:

0 = No response.

1 = Some explanation, but no narrative invention. These responses deal with the explanatory obligation of the task at a minimal level. That is, they answer one or both of the questions with a few bits of information (2 or 3) which tell "what the picture is about."

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

NOTE: Scorers should not take mechanics or transcription errors into consideration. Also, the scorers should judge only the interrelatedness of the ideas, NOT the quality of those ideas.

Examples of Cohesive Ties:

In general, "cohesion" refers to the ways clauses and sentences are related to each other and can be thought of as the gathering and ordering of related ideas. If the parts of a discourse cohere, they "stick" or are "bound" together. Cohesion is achieved by ties of considerable variety. And these ties can be both semantic and structural. Additional examples of specific kinds of cohesion ties are identified by Halliday and Hasan in Cohesion in English (1976).

Lexical

The girl has a jar to put bugs in. The bugs are called fireflies.

Conjunction

Additive -
The girl is catching lightning bugs. She is also catching Butterflies.

Adversative -
I wanted to help the little girl catch fireflies, but I couldn't find her.

Causal -
This little girl is trying to catch fireflies so she can take them to school.

Temporal -
She is catching lightning bugs and putting them in a jar. Next she will show them to her mother. Later she might let them go.

Examples of Cohesive Ties (continued):

Reference

Personal -
There once was a girl. She liked to catch bugs.

Demonstrative -
She is collecting bugs. This collection is for her science class.

Comparative -
I wish I had some bubbles like hers.

Substitution

Nominal -
The lightning bugs are out and the little girl wants to catch some.

Clausal (use of so and not) -
The little girl knows they are fireflies because her mother said so.

Ellipsis

Nominal -
The girl's mother told her to let the bugs go but she wouldn't .

Verbal -
She had to go to her room and couldn't come out until her mother said she could .

Clausal -
She is catching either lightning bugs or butterflies but I don't know which .

Note: While helping plan the 1978-79 writing assessment, National Assessment consultants expressed the opinion that coherence and cohesion deserved special consideration and that a more thorough method of describing information about coherence was needed. In consequence, this cohesion scoring guide was developed and used with this exercise to replace the paragraph coherence guidelines developed in 1973-74.

TRAIT SCORING GUIDE
"RAINY DAY"

Rhetorical Mode: Expressive-Narrative

Primary Trait: Expression of feelings through systematic elaboration of detail consonant with a mood and situation.

Rationale of Primary Trait: The situation is specified as the rainy morning of a school day. The direction "pretend" invites the writer to recall a situation and generalize an attitude toward it. "Write a composition" invites the respondent to be careful about organization, so the elaboration must be systematic in trying to evoke a defined or implied state.

General Scoring Rationale: The key issue is to validate a generalized attitude by citing apt detail. The feelings may be simple (I like it, I hate it) or complex (I feel sad when I get up, but when I go out I feel better). Details may be representative (wet clothes, sound of rain, darkness, hinderance to play, necessity to wear wraps) or analogical (like someone's nagging, like I lost my friends, like I am going to get sick), but they should validate how one feels. A good paper will require a more evident organizational system and more details. Some writers engage in dialoque. Others state a thesis within an explicit situation in the manner of a formal essay. The approach and style are left to the writer but a good paper must have sufficient detail to clearly convey feeling and must be well organized.

Scoring Guide Categories:

0 = No response.

1 = Little or no expression of feelings. These responses do not fulfill the two basic conditions established by the trait--stating a feeling and elaborating that feeling. This may occur in the following ways: 1) one or two feelings may be named but are not substantiated with any kind of detail, 2) a feeling is named but is only substantiated with one unelaborated detail, 3) some details are given, but feelings are not named or are so vague as to be basically nonexistent, or 4) feelings and/or details are too confusing, contradictory or inconsistent to determine the writer's dominant feeling.

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

2 = Minimal expression of feelings. These responses minimally fulfill the two basic conditions established by the trait: 1) they name or clearly imply a feeling (no matter how generalized the naming or implication is, as in, good/bad, like/dislike) and 2) they name some of the consequences of the situation that account for that feeling (no matter how generalized, as in wet, cold, sounds good, looks beautiful) or they name one consequence and elaborate on it.

NOTE: These responses may include contradictory feelings, but most of the paper is devoted to elaborating one of the feelings. Ambivalence (feeling both good and bad) about rainy school days is legitimate. As long as that position is clearly stated, these papers are not considered contradictory.

3 = Expression of feeling. These responses precisely establish a dominant feeling and elaborate using a variety of specific details consistent with the feeling. Some principle of arrangement is present -- temporal, climatic, controlling point of reference, etc. Generally, these papers clearly show competence in expressing and substantiating a feeling. But they do not show simultaneous control of both structure and detail. For example, "3" papers may include some element of conflict in feeling or detail which is not integrated with the dominant attitude (but conflict is merely distracting rather than seriously confused as in "1" responses) or these papers may be well controlled but somewhat lacking in variety and amplitude of detail.

4 = Developed and elaborated expression of feeling. These responses precisely define a feeling or feelings and substantiate them through an amplitude and variety of appropriate details. The details are systematically arranged and placed into a structure and tight control is demonstrated at all points.

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

Examples of Cohesive Ties (continued):

Reference

Personal -
Rainy mornings are never fun for kids. They get wet waiting for the school bus.

Demonstrative -
I feel sad on rainy school mornings. That feeling is one I don't like.

Comparative -
Today's the same kind of rainy day as the one we had yesterday.

Substitution

Nominal -
I couldn't find my yellow rain coat, but my mom told me to take the other one.

Clausal (use of so and not) -
Was it going to rain all day? The weatherman said so.

Ellipsis

Nominal -
This was not the first rainy day I'd stayed in bed, only the second [ ].

Verbal -
I usually stay in bed on rainy mornings, but I didn't [ ] this time.

Clausal -
I could either stay in bed or get up and go to school, but I couldn't decide which [ ].

Note: While helping plan the 1978-79 writing assessment, National Assessment consultants expressed the opinion that coherence and cohesion deserved special consideration and that a more thorough method of describing information about coherence was needed. In consequence, this cohesion scoring guide was developed and used with this exercise to replace the paragraph coherence guidelines developed in 1973-74.

COHESION SCORING GUIDE
(Developed for the 1978-79 Writing Assessment)
"RAINY DAY"

In scoring papers for cohesion, scorers need to be attentive not only to the incidence of cohesive ties but also to their successful ordering. Underlying and further strengthening these ties is syntactic repetition, both within and across sentences. The following example achieves cohesion by lexical cohesion, conjunction, reference, and substitution, and yet these various kinds of cohesion are both emphasized and related among themselves by numerous incidents of syntactic repetition:

> A rainy school morning makes me feel awful. I feel like being mean to my brothers for no reason. On a rainy morning the whole world seems against me. I wake up on the wrong side of the bed and I'm grouchy. On a rainy school morning nothing goes right. I'm late for breakfast, slow in getting dressed and usually I forget something I need for school.

When both the incidence and ordering of cohesive ties pattern the entire piece of writing, the writer has created what we ordinarily call coherence.

Scoring Guide Categories:

1 = Little or no evidence of cohesion. Basically, clauses and sentences are not connected beyond pairings.

2 = Attempts at cohesion. There is evidence of gathering details but little or no evidence that these details are meaningfully ordered. In other words, very little seems lost if the details were rearranged.

3 = Cohesion. Details are both gathered and ordered. Cohesion is achieved in the ways illustrated briefly in the definition above. Cohesion does not necessarily lead to coherence, to the successful binding of parts so that the sense of the whole discourse is greater than the sense of its parts. In pieces of writing that are cohesive rather than coherent, there are large sections of details which cohere but these sections stand apart as sections.

4 = Coherence. While there may be a sense of sections within the piece of writing, the sheer number and variety of cohesion strategies bind the details and sections into a wholeness. This sense of wholeness can be achieved by a saturation of syntactic repetition throughout the piece (see description above) and/or by closure which retrospectively orders the entire piece and/or by general statements which organize the whole piece.

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

NOTE: Scorers should not take mechanics or transcription errors into consideration. Also, the scorers should judge only the interrelatedness of the ideas, NOT the quality of those ideas.

Examples of Cohesive Ties:

In general, "cohesion" refers to the ways clauses and sentences are related to each other and can be thought of as the gathering and ordering of related ideas. If the parts of a discourse cohere, they "stick" or are "bound" together. Cohesion is achieved by ties of considerable variety. And these ties can be both semantic and structural. Additional examples of specific kinds of cohesion ties are identified by Halliday and Hasan in Cohesion in English (1976).

Lexical

I like rain on school days but I dislike rain on weekends.

I stepped right into a puddle. That puddle was a complete surprise to me. That muddy hole ruined my day. That place fooled me.

Conjunction

Additive -
It was a muggy day and I couldn't stay awake.

Adversative -
I really didn't feel like going to school in the rain, yet I did anyway.

Causal -
I love rainy school days because my mom always lets me stay in bed.

Temporal -
I put on my raincoat when it rains. Then I put on my plastic hat. Finally, I get myself out the door.

TRAIT SCORING GUIDE
"STORK"

Rhetorical Mode: Expressive-Narrative

Primary Trait: Fiction to account for a situation.

Rationale of Primary Trait: The exercise calls for the creation of a fictional narrative--"make up a story." The subject, the stork, is given and the three possible first lines, two of which invite dialoque, provide suggestions for situations.

General Scoring Rationale: The techniques of fiction require control of a consistent point of view. Verbal cleverness would be desirable, but this is probably unrealistic for a 25-minute creation. Readers should look for narrative structures and amplifying detail which will entertain with a particular view of the world (expression) and which will account for a given situation (explanation). The reader's problem is to balance vividness, inventiveness, and aptness against consistency provided by a sustained structure and point of view.

Scoring Guide Categories:

0 = No response.

1 = No evidence of storytelling. These responses do not show evidence of storytelling. Thus, they either accumulate details without a situation to anchor and unite them, or they add just a few descriptive details to one of the situations provided in the stem.

2 = Some evidence of storytelling. These responses attempt the basic task of storytelling They invent a situation to account for the bird, but the fictional demands are fundamentally unfulfilled for one of several reasons: 1) the response may give the bare outline of a plot, with a beginning, middle and end, but little or no elaboration of detail; 2) the response may have no sense of a plot, but may simply ramble on from the initial situation with many details, but with no process or purpose to give it point or structure; 3) the response may begin telling a story, but never get further than the beginning; 4) the response may relate several separate stories without evident connection between them.

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

3 = Clear evidence of storytelling. These responses clearly show evidence of the storyteller's obligation to structure a plot and elaborate it with appropriate details. Thus they show a markedly greater sense of coherence with amplitude than "2" responses. But they are usually somewhat flawed in one of the following ways: 1) one or another part of the basic plot may be thinly or inconsistently detailed; 2) the situation may be established, the plot developed, but the piece may come to an end without a clear or appropriate closure; 3) the plot may be completely elaborated, but it contains technical inconsistencies in point of view, handling of dialogue or management of narration.

4 = Structure and complete storytelling. These responses tell a complete story, amply as well as appropriately detailed at all points, and fully as well as consistently resolved. They exhibit tight control in the management of a whole fiction to provide context for the status of the bird.

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

COHESION SCORING GUIDE
(Developed for the 1978-79 Writing Assessment)
"STORK"

In scoring papers for cohesion, scorers need to be attentive not only to the incidence of cohesive ties but also to their successful ordering. Underlying and further strengthening these ties is syntactic repetition, both within and across sentences. The following example achieves cohesion by lexical cohesion, conjunction, reference, and substitution, and yet these various kinds of cohesion are both emphasized and related among themselves by numerous incidents of syntactic repetition:

> Yesterday afternoon while coming home from school, I saw this odd-looking bird. Not knowing what it was, I stopped the car and picked it up. That was a very bad mistake. The poor thing was afraid of the car. While I was driving along it began to jump around and scream. The best thing I knew to do was to take the bird back to where I got it. So I did. It was perfectly contented. So there I left it and I went on home.

When both the incidence and ordering of cohesive ties pattern the entire piece of writing, the writer has created what we ordinarily call coherence.

Scoring Guide Categories:

1 = Little or no evidence of cohesion. Basically, clauses and sentences are not connected beyond pairings.

2 = Attempts at cohesion. There is evidence of gathering details but little or no evidence that these details are meaningfully ordered. In other words, very little seems lost if the details were rearranged.

3 = Cohesion. Details are both gathered and ordered. Cohesion is achieved in the ways illustrated briefly in the definition above. Cohesion does not necessarily lead to coherence, to the successful binding of parts so that the sense of the whole discourse is greater than the sense of its parts. In pieces of writing that are cohesive rather than coherent, there are large sections of details which cohere but these sections stand apart as sections.

4 = Coherence. While there may be a sense of sections within the piece of writing, the sheer number and variety of cohesion strategies bind the details and sections into a wholeness. This sense of wholeness can be achieved by a saturation of syntactic repetition throughout the piece (see description above) and/or by closure which retrospectively orders the entire piece and/or by general statements which organize the whole piece.

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

NOTE: Scorers should not take mechanics or transcription errors into consideration. Also, the scorers should judge only the interrelatedness of the ideas, NOT the quality of those ideas.

Examples of Cohesive Ties:

In general, "cohesion" refers to the ways clauses and sentences are related to each other and can be thought of as the gathering and ordering of related ideas. If the parts of a discourse cohere, they "stick" or are "bound" together. Cohesion is achieved by ties of considerable variety. And these ties can be both semantic and structural. Additional examples of specific kinds of cohesion ties are identified by Halliday and Hasan in Cohesion in English (1976).

Lexical

The bird seemed very frightened. I ran into the house to get some food to feed the bird.

Conjunction

Additive -
Henry's bird is getting bigger by the day; in addition, he is eating us out of house and home.

Adversative -
I know I saw the bird taking a bath in our sprinkler; however, by the time I had convinced my mother, he was gone.

Causal -
My mother said I couldn't keep the bird; consequently, I gave him to our neighbor.

Temporal -
We decided to catch the bird. First, I told my brother to get a box, then, we put him in it. Now, he is our pet.

Examples of Cohesive Ties (continued):

Reference

Personal -
This odd-looking bird just stood and looked at me and I could see he was tame.

Demonstrative -
When I first saw the bird, I ran. That sight would frighten anyone.

Comparative -
Did you know there is a bird swimming around in our pool and he is taller than me.

Substitution

Nominal -
I tried to find the odd-looking bird everyone was talking about but all I saw were the usual ones.

Clausal (use of so and not) -
I asked if the bird was dangerous and the policeman said he thought not.

Ellipsis

Nominal -
Everyone said the bird would be there in the morning but I stayed up to make sure [ ].

Verbal -
This odd-looking bird started jumping around in the back seat of my car. The only thing I could do was let it go so I did [ ].

Clausal -
I have never seen a bird as ugly as that [ ].

Note: While helping plan the 1978-79 writing assessment, National Assessment consultants expressed the opinion that coherence and cohesion deserved special consideration and that a more thorough method of describing information about coherence was needed. In consequence, this cohesion scoring guide was developed and used with this exercise to replace the paragraph coherence guidelines developed in 1973-74.

TRAIT SCORING GUIDE
"RECREATION CENTER"

Rhetorical Mode: Persuasive - Social/Community

Primary Trait: Persuasion through invention and elaboration of arguments appropriate to specified issues and limited to an audience with a mixed bias.

Rationale of Primary Trait: This task represents controversial situations that prevail in any civilized society-- situations which are resolved by a deliberative response. The directive to "be as convincing as possible" indicates the persuasive orientation of the task. It requires that respondents develop and support arguments appropriate to their position.

General Scoring Rationale: Support may consist of evidence and/or appeals to general truths, to experience, or to social and economic values. The support must be consistent with the position and should be of at least moderate length to demonstrate competence (scale point "3"). Excellence is achieved by demonstrating a capacity not only to invert and support arguments but also by addressing both sides of a controversial issue. Thus, the most successful respondents will be able to support their case on its own merits as well as answer or refute at moderate length the causes of the opposition.

Scoring Guide Categories:

0 = No response.

1 = Do not define and defend a point of view. Some of these papers have not explicitly or implicitly taken a position. Others may contain a thesis statement or clearly imply a position but do not give several supporting reasons to develop their arguments. Some typical score point "1" papers present:

(a) Attitudes and opinions about related social issues without a clear statement of position--these include free-floating, uncontrolled statements of opinion showing no concern for taking a stand and supporting it.

(b) Position statements but no related support--often these papers merely reiterate their stand in various forms.

Scoring Guide Categories (continued):

(c) Position statements preceded or followed by elaborate introductions.

(d) Position statements followed by arguments and appeals not connected to the crucial issues.

(e) Position statements followed by one or two undeveloped reasons.

(f) Position statements but the paper goes off tangentially into another realm (clarifying terms, personal gripes, etc.)

2 = Define a point of view and offer minimal defense. These papers explicitly state or strongly imply a position and give one or more clusters of arguments or appeals. (A cluster is a reason asserted with no more than one or two bits of evidence or related appeal.) Score point "2" papers usually consist of a chain of briefly developed appeals in support of a position or answering the opposition. They do not develop a line of argument or link the clusters to each other. (The underlying assumption is that the lines of arguments, reasons or appeals are appropriate to the issue.)

3 = Define and defend a point of view. These papers clearly state or imply a position and present at least one substantially developed line of argument or two moderately developed lines of argument relevant to the issues at hand. More evidence to support the position is presented than in "2" papers.

4 = Systematically define and defend a point of view. These papers present at least two moderately developed lines of argument, one which supports the position and one which answers the possible arguments raised by the opposition. The lines of argument usually will be linked as well as carefully organized. Other "4" papers may contain a moderate statement of support with a brief address answering each of the major opposition positions.

7 = Illegible, illiterate.

8 = Misunderstands the task, writes on another topic.

9 = I don't know.

SENTENCE COMBINING SCORING GUIDE
"BILL'S COAT, ROPE, MAGICIAN"

A score of "1" in Number of T-units, Description of Lexical Content, and Syntax indicates the respondent successfully completed the task.

Number of T-Units

1 = All one T-Unit.
2 = Two T-Units.
3 = Three T-Units.
4 = Four or more T-Units.
5 = 0 T-Units -- fragments that are sufficiently developed to continue scoring.

Description of Lexical Content

1 = No addition to or omission of given content (ignore synonymous substitutions).
2 = Some content added.
3 = Some content omitted.
4 = Some content added and some omitted.

The following nouns, verbs, and adjectives, or synonymous substitutes, are considered essential to this exercise:

Part A

Bill's coat	new
was	leather
in the closet	

Part B

rope	hanging
clue	tree/branch
mystery	was
twisted	

Part C

John	can make/makes
knows	an elephant/elephants
magician	disappear
clever	

Syntax

1 = Synonymous with given sentences -- including invented logical, syntactical relationships that are not prohibited by the given sentences.

2 = Alteration of given syntactic relations.

3 = Ambiguous -- based solely on the rules governing ambiguities.

A misplaced modifier is scored as an ambiguity when more than one noun could be legitimately modified by the phrase or clause.

4 = Ineptitudes (awkward and inappropriate constructions).

Writer carried two structural parts from the original sentence to the combined sentence but failed to conjoin them.

Example: The rope that was limp hung from the tree branch was a clue to the mystery.

The modification or logical relationship seemingly intended in a sentence does not make sense.

Example: The clever magician can make an elephant disappear known by John.

Faulty parallelism -- an attempt to parallel but implementation poor. Not formally or grammatically implemented or formally and grammatically in order but semantically inappropriate - ideas are illogically combined.

Agreement errors -- subject-verb agreement, a/an confusion.

Illogical connection -- misuse of conjunctive words. Dangling modifiers are scored inept when you know, using common sense, which noun the clause or phrase was intended to modify but the resulting sentence is awkward.

Example: Bill's coat was in the closet which was new and leather.

Other dysfunctional constructions -- content words are omitted resulting in an awkward sentence.

Inversions

1 = Active/passive constructions, clefts and expletives ("There," "It" constructions) - absent.

2 = Active/passive constructions, clefts and expletives ("There," "It" constructions) - present.

Description of Combining Strategies

Adjectival Embeddings

11 = Pre-noun modifiers (words or hyphenated phrases).
12 = Post-noun modifying words and phrases (includes adjective prepositional phrases and appositions).
13 = Post-noun relative clauses.
14 = Post-noun nonreduced relative clauses.

Nominal Embeddings

21 = "One-word" (uncomplemented) gerunds or infinitives.
22 = Nominal phrases (gerunds or infinitives).
23 = Nominal clauses (fact "that" or question clauses).

Adverbial Embeddings

31 = Single-word adverbs and adverbial prepositional phrases.
32 = Verbal phrases (infinitive phrases, gerundives following time, manner, etc.).
33 = Adverbial clauses (place, time, manner, reason, purpose, condition, concession, etc.).

Conjunctions

41 = Conjoined verbs, predicate phrases, noun phrases.
42 = Participial conjunctions, nominative absolutes.
43 = Coordinate compounding (any instance of two or more T-Units compounded by coordinating conjunctions and, plus, for, but, yet, etc.).
44 = Conjunctive adverbial compounding (any instance of two or more T-Units).
45 = Fusions, comma splices, run-ons.

Other

Responses that were not appropriate for categorization in the preceding guide were placed in one of the following categories:

0 = No response.
2 = Copies one or more of the sentences as given or with minor variations.
3 = Copies sentences conjoining with the same conjunction (and, plus, but, etc.).
7 = Illegible, illiterate.
8 = Did not write on this exercise, unscoreable sentence fragment.
9 = I don't know.

SENTENCE COMBINING SCORING GUIDE
"CRIES, GUARD, LOOKOUT"

A score of "1" in Number of T-units, Description of Lexical Content, and Syntax indicates the respondent successfully completed the task.

Number of T-Units

1 = All one T-Unit.
2 = Two T-Units.
3 = Three T-Units.
4 = Four or more T-Units.
5 = 0 T-Units -- fragments that are sufficiently developed to continue scoring.

Description of Lexical Content

1 = No addition to or omission of given content (ignore synonymous substitutions).
2 = Some content added.
3 = Some content omitted.
4 = Some content added and some omitted.

The following nouns, verbs, and adjectives, or synonymous substitutes, are considered essential to this exercise:

Part A

cries	were lost
thin	her
small	

Part B

guard	bored
kept	at the doorway
children	dusty
from touching/from	stuffed
animals	in the museum/display

Part C

lookout	tidal wave/wave
frightened	swamp
clinging	ship
to the mast	send
realized	to the depths

Syntax

1 = Synonymous with given sentences -- including invented logical, syntactical relationships that are not prohibited by the given sentences.

2 = Alteration of given syntactic relations.

3 = Ambiguous -- based solely on the rules governing ambiguities.

A misplaced modifier is scored as an ambiguity when more than one noun could be legitimately modified by the phrase or clause.

Example: The bored guard kept the children from touching the animals from the corner.

4 = Ineptitudes (awkward and inappropriate constructions).

Writer carried two structural parts from the original sentence to the combined sentence but failed to conjoin them.

Example: Her thin cries were small were lost.

The modification or logical relationship seemingly intended in a sentence does not make sense.

Faulty parallelism -- an attempt to parallel but implementation poor. Not formally or grammatically implemented or formally and grammatically in order but semantically inappropriate - ideas are illogically combined.

Agreement errors -- subject-verb agreement, a/an confusion.

Illogical connection -- misuse of conjunctive words. Dangling modifiers are scored inept when you know, using common sense, which noun the clause or phrase was intended to modify but the resulting sentence is awkward.

Example: The bored guard at the doorway kept the dusty stuffed animals from being touched by the children that were in the museum display.

Other dysfunctional constructions -- content words are omitted resulting in an awkward sentence.

Inversions

1 = Active/passive constructions, clefts and expletives ("There," "It" constructions) - absent.

2 = Active/passive constructions, clefts and expletives ("There," "It" constructions) - present.

Description of Combining Strategies

Adjectival Embeddings

11 = Pre-noun modifiers (words or hyphenated phrases).
12 = Post-noun modifying words and phrases (includes adjective prepositional phrases and appositions).
13 = Post-noun relative clauses.
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41 = Conjoined verbs, predicate phrases, noun phrases.
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Other

Responses that were not appropriate for categorization in the preceding guide were placed in one of the following categories:

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3 = Copies sentences conjoining with the same conjunction (and, plus, but, etc.).
7 = Illegible, illiterate.
8 = Did not write on this exercise, unscoreable sentence fragment.
9 = I don't know.

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Table C-1. Responses of 9-Year-Olds to Background Questionnaire[+]

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
1. Does your family get a newspaper regularly?			
Yes	68.6%	69.0%	68.1%
No	25.2	25.5	24.9
I don't know.	6.2	5.4	7.0
2. Does your family get any magazines regularly?			
Yes	53.2	55.2	51.2
No	36.2	35.3	37.1
I don't know.	10.6	9.5	11.7
3. Are there more than 25 books in your home?			
Yes	86.5	89.4	83.3
No	6.5	6.0	7.0
I don't know.	6.9	4.4	9.7
4. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?			
Yes	68.0	70.7	65.2
No	24.0	22.8	25.2
I don't know.	8.0	6.5	9.6

Table C-1. (Continued)

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
5. Before you started school what language (s) did you speak most often at home?			
English only	70.9%	69.8%	72.0%
A language other than English	6.8	5.7	7.9
English and some other language	20.3	22.0	18.4
I don't know.	1.8	2.2	1.5
(No response)	0.3	0.3	0.3
6. Is English the language spoken most often in your home now?			
Yes	85.9	84.5	87.4
No	11.6	12.2	10.8
I don't know.	2.5	3.3	1.8
7. Altogether, how long have you attended the Overseas Dependents Schools?			
Less than 1 year	20.1	19.3	21.1
1 to 2 years	34.5	34.8	34.2
3 years or more	39.0	39.7	38.3
I don't know.	6.2	6.2	6.2
(No response)	0.1	0.0	0.3

+May not total 100% due to rounding.

Table C-2. Responses of 13-Year-Olds to Background Questionnaire[+]

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
1. Does your family get a newspaper regularly?			
Yes	83.6%	82.8%	84.4%
No	14.9	15.4	14.4
I don't know.	1.6	1.8	1.3
2. Does your family get any magazines regularly?			
Yes	69.1	68.7	69.5
No	24.2	24.0	24.4
I don't know.	6.7	7.3	6.1
3. Are there more than 25 books in your home?			
Yes	95.5	95.0	96.0
No	1.3	1.6	1.0
I don't know.	3.2	3.4	3.0
4. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?			
Yes	77.7	78.9	76.6
No	19.5	17.5	21.4
I don't know.	2.8	3.7	2.0

Table C-2. (Continued)

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
5. Before you started school what language (s) did you speak most often at home?			
English only	68.0%	70.2%	65.7%
A language other than English	9.2	7.6	10.8
English and some other language	21.3	20.1	22.4
I don't know.	1.5	2.1	1.0
6. Is English the language spoken most often in your home now?			
Yes	89.0	90.9	87.2
No	9.5	7.1	11.8
I don't know.	1.5	2.1	1.0
7. Altogether, how long have you attended the Overseas Dependents Schools?			
Less than 1 year	14.9	15.9	13.9
1 to 2 years	28.7	27.4	30.0
3 years or more	53.7	54.3	53.2
I don't know.	2.7	2.4	3.0
8. Where did you live on your ninth birthday?			
In the United States	72.1	73.4	70.8
Outside the United States	24.8	23.2	26.2
I don't know.	3.2	3.4	3.0

+May not total 100% due to rounding error

Table C-3. Responses of 17-Year-Olds to Background Questionnaire[+]

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
1. Does your family get a newspaper regularly?			
Yes	89.1%	91.6%	86.7%
No	10.4	7.9	13.0
I don't know.	0.4	0.6	0.3
2. Does your family get any magazines regularly?			
Yes	77.7	79.4	76.0
No	19.6	18.6	20.6
I don't know.	2.7	2.0	3.4
3. Are there more than 25 books in your home?			
Yes	96.8	96.6	96.9
No	1.3	1.7	0.9
I don't know.	2.0	1.7	2.3
4. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?			
Yes	81.0	77.8	84.2
No	17.6	20.3	15.0
I don't know.	1.4	2.0	0.9

Table C-3. (Continued)

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
5. Before you started school what language (s) did you speak most often at home?			
English only	70.5%	69.6%	71.5%
A language other than English	7.2	5.6	8.8
English and some other language	21.7	24.2	19.2
I don't know.	0.6	0.6	0.6
6. Is English the language spoken most often in your home now?			
Yes	93.0	93.8	92.1
No	5.6	5.6	5.7
I don't know.	1.4	0.6	2.3
7. Altogether, how long have you attended the Overseas Dependents Schools?			
Less than 1 year	13.3	14.7	11.9
1 to 2 years	22.0	21.1	22.9
3 years or more	63.3	62.5	64.1
I don't know.	1.4	1.7	1.1
8. Where did you live on your ninth birthday?			
In the United States	65.4	66.8	64.1
Outside the United States	32.3	31.3	33.3
I don't know.	2.3	2.0	2.5

Table C-3. (Continued)

	All DoDDS Students	Males	Females
9. Where did you live on your thirteenth birthday?			
In the United States	66.4%	65.6%	67.2%
Outside the United States	32.4	33.2	31.6
I don't know.	1.1	1.1	1.1

+May not total 100% due to rounding

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